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THE CAMPAIGN IN ABYSSINIA.

BY

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SKETCH MAP of ABYSSINIA
showing the
ROUTE FROM ZOULLA TO MAGDALA

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INTRODUCTION.

It had become very evident, by the middle of 1867, that all peaceful attempts to effect the release of the British subjects and others held in captivity by Theodorus, Emperor of Abyssinia, had been, and would be, unattended with success. Theodorus had, for reasons best known to himself, but which may yet be better understood, determined to retain his hold of every European within his borders, be he Envoy Extraordinary or Attaché, until he should be compelled by force to surrender them. The difficulties inseparably connected with a campaign in Abyssinia were patent to every one ; and great reluctance was naturally felt to embarking on such a serious undertaking. The expense could not but be enormous ; that, however, was always regarded as a very secondary consideration; pounds, shillings, and pence could never be put in the balance with the honour of the nation. But our knowledge of the country was almost *nil;* the Government and military authorities had little to guide them even in the selection of the season in which to commence operations ; and where to commence, was a question on which even those who knew anything of the coast differed widely in opinion.

At the same time, prospects, the reverse of cheerful, were held out to any Force that might be sent into the country. Fever, dysentery, ague, and a

long train of diseases besides, were to meet the army at every turn; ugly flies with ugly names were to annoy the men, and kill the animals; scorpions and snakes were to be the scourge of all and sundry; water was always to be scarce, and often poisonous. No wonder that Lord Stanley and the Government pondered long before committing the country to an expedition so beset with horrors behind and before. They saw, however, that the undertaking was being forced upon them, and wisely began to prepare for it in time. Having once decided upon the venture, they prosecuted it with vigour.

It seems from the first to have been decided, that in the event of any expedition being organized, Bombay should be the base of operations, and that the Government of Bombay should be entrusted with its organization. Accordingly, on the 10th of July, 1867, the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India (Sir Stafford Northcote) telegraphed to the Governor of Bombay (Sir Seymour Fitzgerald) for information regarding the time likely to be required for the equipment and provisioning of the Force, in the event of an expedition being determined on, and the amount of assistance that would be required from England. Four months was the time first specified as likely to be required, but it was manifestly impossible to do more than merely guess at it, as the strength of the Force was not determined upon, and the difficulty of collecting transport animals had not yet been realized.

The first things to be done were, therefore, to

obtain information regarding the country, and to collect transport. Orders were accordingly transmitted to Bombay from the India Office, directing the Bombay Government to send such officers as Sir Robert Napier might select, to make enquiries concerning Abyssinia on the Coast of the Red Sea,—these to communicate with Colonel Merewether at Aden. Colonel Merewether had however been summoned to Bombay, and the result of deliberations subsequent to his arrival, was the despatch of a Pioneer or Reconnoitring Party, with Colonels Merewether and Phayre at its head. It was already felt that the season was wearing late, and that not a day was now to be lost if an expedition was contemplated. The Bombay Government telegraphed to the Cabinet in a hopeful and encouraging tone, to the effect that the campaign ought to commence vigorously in January, in order to be completed in one season, that they could easily have the Force ready in time, if only animals could be obtained, and that now was precisely the time to secure as much tonnage as might be necessary. Orders were therefore issued to proceed with the collection of mules, camels, bullocks and other beasts of burden. Officers were immediately despatched to Bussorah, Bushire, Mocha, &c. for this purpose. In accordance with instructions from England, regard was had to the possibility of operations extending into 1868-69, and to the necessity of making such preparations as should be available for that season as well as for 1867-68.

Such an active part had Colonel Merewether (then Political Resident at Aden, now Commissioner in Scinde) always taken in procuring information regarding the ill-fated representatives of England in Abyssinia, and in carrying out the wishes of Government regarding them, that he was not unnaturally looked upon by many as the officer most likely to be entrusted with the command of the expedition. In addition to his possessing political experience, and a greater knowledge of the internal affairs of the country than perhaps any other officer available, he had proved himself to be a dashing and skilful soldier. It was not therefore to be wondered at that Sir Seymour Fitzgerald should ask to be informed whether Merewether was to have the command. It was, however, the desire of Government that Sir Robert Napier should himself be at the head of the Force, with Major General Sir Charles Staveley as his second. "Her Majesty's Government," says Sir Stafford Northcote, in writing to His Excellency the Governor of Bombay, "having great confidence in Sir "Robert Napier, desire to place the whole conduct of "the negociations, as well as the military direction of "the armed Force, in his hands, and to leave him "to use his discretion as to the time and mode in "which he will make the demand for the restora-"tion of the captives, and the steps by which *he* "will enforce it." And the whole nation approved the choice and determination of Government. A similar notification to the above extract made in the House of Commons, in reply to a question put by an

honourable member, was received with undisguised delight. Colonel Merewether's previous services were not allowed, however, to pass unrecognized. Both Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Stanley frequently expressed, in their despatches, the high appreciation set by Her Majesty's Government on that officer's long-protracted services in connection with Abyssinia, and their earnest hope that they might be made available till the close.

Preparations of all kinds had now been in progress for quite a month, when the Secretary of State for India sent instructions to Sir Robert Napier, to make a peremptory demand for the delivery of the captives, and to follow up that demand with such measures as he deemed expedient. But it was thought in Bombay that before Sir Robert Napier, whose name was unknown in Abyssinia, should make this demand, and announce hostilities, an intimation should be made by Lord Stanley in the Queen's name, that further pacific communications were now impossible, and that the matter had been placed in Sir Robert Napier's hands to enforce redress. This suggestion was adopted by the Home Government, and Lord Stanley addressed the following letter "to His Majesty Theodore, King of Abyssinia:—

"FOREIGN OFFICE, *London, September 9th*, 1867.

"Many months have now elapsed since the Queen, "my Sovereign, on the 4th of October, 1866, and "Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign "Affairs, on the 16th of April of this year, appealed

"to your Majesty in order to obtain the release "from the captivity in which they have for a long "period been most unjustifiably held, of officers "sent to your Court on public matters, and of other "individuals who have come under your control.

"But your Majesty has disregarded these suc- "cessive appeals, has made light of the remon- "strances and representations of the Queen, and has "rejected the friendly overtures which have so "repeatedly been made to you by Her Majesty's "commands.

"It is impossible for the Queen any longer to "endure such conduct on the part of your Majesty, "and her Majesty has, therefore, given orders that "a military Force, under the command of Lieuten- "ant General Sir Robert Napier, K.C.B., should, "without delay, enter your dominions, and obtain "from you by force a concession which you have "hitherto withheld from friendly representations.

"For the result of this measure, whatever may "be the consequences of it to your throne and to "your country, your Majesty can alone be held res- "ponsible throughout the civilized world; and, "although the Queen would fain hope that, even "in this last hour, your Majesty may be induced to "listen to words of peace, and avert by full and "immediate concession the attack which in a *short* "space of time will be directed against you, *I* am "commanded by the Queen to warn your *Majesty* "that the course of action which *I now* make "known to you is irrevocably *determined* on, and

"that the only means of preserving your country "from war, and your own power from overthrow, "will be found in the delivery to the commander "of the British invading army of all European "prisoners in your keeping; and it is the earnest "desire of the Queen that this last opportunity "which Her Majesty offers to you may be taken "advantage of by your Majesty, and that peace "may be so preserved between England and "Abyssinia.

"Having thus fulfilled the command of the "Queen, my Sovereign, I bid your Majesty heartily "farewell.—Your sincere friend,

"STANLEY."

This letter was followed up by the following Proclamation from Sir Robert Napier in Bombay, dated November, 1867:—

"To THEODORUS, King of Abyssinia.

"I am commanded by Her Majesty the Queen of "England to demand that the prisoners whom your "Majesty has wrongfully detained in captivity shall "be immediately released, and sent in safety to the "British Camp.

"Should your Majesty fail to comply with this "demand, I am further commanded to enter your "Majesty's country at the head of an army to en- "force it, and nothing will arrest my progress until "this object shall have been accomplished.

"My Sovereign has no desire to deprive you of "any part of your dominions, nor to subvert your

"authority, although it is obvious that such would "in all probability be the result of hostilities.

"Your Majesty might avert this danger by the "immediate surrender of the prisoners.

"But should they not be delivered safely into "my hands, should they suffer a continuance of ill- "treatment, or should any injury befall them, your "Majesty will be held personally responsible, and no "hope of future condonation need be entertained.

"R. NAPIER, Lieut.-General,

"Commander-in-Chief, Bombay Army."

Both these letters were despatched by Colonel Merewether, no precaution being omitted that could tend in any way to ensure their safe delivery to Theodorus. As was afterwards ascertained, both reached Magdala, the messengers fearing to convey them to His Majesty. Perhaps this was well, for Mr. Rassam and the other captives had an opportunity of perusing them, and acting as they thought best at the moment. The result was that Lord Stanley's letter was destroyed on the spot, as His Majesty's frame of mind was such as to lead him to treat all communications from the coast with contempt, and this one might have provoked an outburst of fury. It was decided to retain General Napier's, and to use it as a last weapon in the event of any change for the worse *taking* place in their circumstances. To *forward* it, would, they all considered, be very *inadvisable*, especially as the last sentence had been so rendered

in Amharic as to convey a slightly erroneous meaning. The language of the translation was such as to suggest the prejudgment and condemnation of Theodorus, act how he might after receipt of it. One or more copies of Sir Robert's proclamation must, however, have found its way to the King's hands; for an Abyssinian priest told Mr. Flad in the end of February, that the English Chief had written to Theodorus, warning him not to hurt the prisoners, or "*baggo nagger I mattem*"—"it would be ill for him."

Yet another proclamation was issued by the Commander-in-Chief, which it may be well to quote. It was addressed to the Governors, the Chiefs, the religious orders, and the people of Abyssinia:—

"It is known to you that Theodorus, King of "Abyssinia, detains in captivity the British Consul "Cameron, the British Envoy Rassam, and many "others, in violation of the laws of all civilised "nations.

"All friendly persuasion having failed to obtain "their release, my sovereign has commanded me "to lead an army to liberate them.

"All who befriend the prisoners or assist in their "liberation, shall be well rewarded, but those who "may injure them shall be severely punished.

"When the time shall arrive for the march of a "British Army through your country, bear in mind, "People of Abyssinia, that the Queen of England "has no unfriendly feelings towards you, and no "design against your country or your liberty.

"Your religious establishment, your persons, "and property shall be carefully protected.

"All supplies for my soldiers shall be paid for.

"No peaceable inhabitants shall be molested.

"The sole object for which the British Force has "been sent to Abyssinia is the liberation of Her "Majesty's servants and others unjustly detained "as captives, and as soon as that object is effected it "will be withdrawn.

"There is no intention to occupy permanently "any portion of the Abyssinian territory or to "interfere with the government of the country."

The foregoing proclamation was made in October 1867, being disseminated as widely as possible, so as to prevent misunderstanding among the chiefs and people regarding the purpose of the expedition. Colonel Merewether, to whom this duty was entrusted, was also authorized to open communication with such of the chiefs and governors as might be able to influence operations, to assure them of the pacific intentions of the English towards them and their people, and to engage them to prevent any acts of hostility on the part of their people towards the Force, and thus avoid the evil consequences that would ensue.

But we are anticipating. The despatch of the Pioneer Force from Bombay has not yet been noticed, although it had of course reached Annesley Bay before the events recorded above. All necessary preparations having been completed, the Pioneer Force sailed from Bombay on the 16th of

September, in the steamers *Euphrates* and *Coromandel*, the former under the charge of Lieut. Dawes of the old Indian Navy as transport officer, and the latter commanded by Lieut. Hewitt, of the same service. Both these officers were well acquainted with Massowah and its approaches, as also with the navigation of the Red Sea; hence their selection. The Pioneer Force consisted of a troop of the 3rd Light Cavalry, about 100 men of the 21st Bombay Native Infantry (Marine Battalion), and a company of Sappers and Miners. The officers were Colonel Merewether, C.B., Colonel Phayre of the Quarter Master General's department, Colonel Wilkins, R. E., Major F. P. Mignon, Commissariat department; Major Baigrie and Captain Pottinger, Quarter Master General's department; Captain W. Goodfellow, R. E., Dr. Lumsdaine, Dr. Martin, Lieut. Jopp, R. E., Lieut. Mortimer and Lieut. Hennell, of the Transport Train.

In accordance with instructions from His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, a committee was formed, consisting of Colonel Merewether as President, Colonel Phayre, Colonel Wilkins, the senior Naval Officer, and the senior Medical Officer as members, to decide on the point of debarkation, after weighing fully all the information they might obtain, and the reports of the various departments which formed the expedition. For deciding all points not connected with the port and landing-places, the same committee was formed, with the exception of the Naval member. The following points were

those to which the attention of the committee was specially directed:—

The nature of the supplies, description of grain, and natural forage for horses and baggage animals in the country between the port and Antalo, also in Lasta and the Zobal.

The arrangements that might be practicable to engage the services of any of the tribes on the coast for securing communication, and the protection of forage parties or cattle.

The nature of any arrangements that might be practicable for securing the transport of supplies by local carriage from the coast inland.

Every information as to the nature and extent of carriage obtainable for purchase or hire and how any that might be obtained would be supplied with gear and drivers.

The Commander-in-Chief particularly desired every officer connected with the reconnoissance to be strictly guided by the instructions and wishes of Colonel Merewether, who was held responsible that no unnecessary risks should be run.

After a careful examination of the coast, a landing place was fixed upon in Annesley Bay, at a spot a few miles from the ruin of Zoula, the ancient Adulis. The Bay formed an excellent harbour, affording excellent anchorage, and room for a hundred large vessels to swing at anchor. There was promise of water at Mulkhutto, a mile from the landing place, and also indications of forage. Though both these promises turned out to be delusive, Zoula was

after all the best landing place that could have been selected. It had one slight drawback, viz., somewhat shallow water for a considerable distance from the shore, necessitating extensive piers for the landing of goods; but then some drawback was unavoidable. Ultimately the Punjab Pioneers found water about a mile beyond Mulkhutto, and this supply never failed, though, of course, it was unequal to meet the requirements of the army of transport animals and followers congregated at Zoula. The steamers in the Bay had to distil water night and day from the commencement of the campaign till its close; they provided virtually all the water consumed at Zoula from the commencement of the campaign till its close—over seven and a quarter million gallons. Koomaylee, some twelve miles distant, at the foot of the hills, was luckily well supplied, and soon the arrangements for watering at that extensive depôt were all that could be desired. The water was really good, and Norton's and Bastier's pumps were kept in capital order by Lieut. LeMessurier of the Royal Engineers.

A landing place once selected, Colonel Merewether, Colonel Phayre, Major Baigrie, and the rest of them did not allow the grass to grow under their feet, supposing, for the sake of the metaphor, that vegetation was inclined to be profuse on the "barren barren shore" of Annesley Bay, or the dreary dreary wastes around the torrent beds of the Koomaylee and the Huddas. Even more important than a landing place, was the route by which the Force

should advance to the Highlands. While, therefore, Major Mignon set about establishing his depôt, and Captain Goodfellow to construct piers, tramways, &c. the Reconnoitring Party set out upon a careful survey of the coast and an examination of the different Passes from the lowlands into Abyssinia proper. The reports submitted by Colonel Phayre to the Bombay Government testify to the zeal, endurance, ability, and painstaking with which these reconnoissances were conducted. First one torrent bed was examined, and then another, the Ragooley, the Huddas, and the Sooroo. The second of these had been looked upon with most favour hitherto; it says, therefore, a great deal for the wisdom and good sense of Colonel Merewether and his colleagues, that they unequivocally declared, after survey, for the Sooroo route.

Meanwhile, great preparations had been in progress at Bombay for the despatch of the Advance Brigade, final arrangements being in the hands of Brigadier General Russell, commanding Bombay Garrison, though Sir Robert Napier was almost constantly on the spot in person. The embarkation of the brigade commenced on the morning of October 4, when the Head-quarter wing of the 3rd Light Cavalry, which had arrived by train from Poona the previous evening, was conveyed on board the transports allotted to it; and the left wing embarked on the following day. By the 7th idem the whole of the brigade, consisting, in addition to the above-named regiment, of the 10th Bombay Native Infantry, the

3rd and 4th Companies of Sappers and Miners, and No. 1 Company Native Artillery, was on board ship; and on the afternoon of that day, the S.S. *India* with the *Hydree* in tow, S. S. *Dalhousie*, with the *Star of the North* in tow, S. S. *Arabia*, with the *Atmosphere* in tow, and the S. S. *Sir Bartle Frere* sailed for Annesley Bay. These were followed on the morrow by the S. S. *Ottawa*, with the *Mandalay* in tow, and the S. S. *Sattara*, with the *Queen of Australia* in tow. This brigade was under the Command of Colonel Field, 10th N. I., to whom was assigned the temporary rank of Brigadier General.

About a month after the departure of this brigade from Bombay, the Sind brigade sailed from Kurrachee. It consisted of H. M.'s 33rd regiment, G Battery 14th Brigade R. A., and 27th N. I. (1st Belooch Battalion).

The second brigade from Bombay sailed on the 14th and 16th December. It consisted of the 3rd and 5th Batteries 21st Brigade Royal Artillery (which were to be supplied in Abyssinia), with steel mountain rifled guns, 7 pounders, the 4th King's Own (Royal) Regiment, the 3rd Bombay Native Infantry, and the 25th Bombay Native Infantry. Previous to the departure of this brigade, Major General Sir Charles Staveley, K.C.B., Second in Command of the Abyssinian Field Force, had sailed from Bombay for Zoula. His presence at Zoula was much required, and under his supervision and direction confusion soon gave place to well re-

gulated order. On the 21st of December, Sir Robert Napier himself sailed.

At the time of His Excellency's departure, the third brigade, consisting of the 45th Foot, 2nd Bombay Native Infantry (Grenadiers), and 8th Bombay Native Infantry, was on the eve of leaving; and the fourth brigade, it was definitely arranged, should await the orders of the Commander-in-Chief after he had himself seen how matters were progressing at Zoula, Senafe, and elsewhere. The fourth brigade consisted of the 26th Regiment (Cameronians), the 5th Bombay Light Infantry, and 18th Bombay Native Infantry.

Three companies of Madras Sappers had sailed from Beypore; the 23rd Punjab Pioneers had left Calcutta; and arrangements for despatching the remainder of the Brigade—21st Punjab Infantry, 10th and 12th Bengal Cavalry and 5-25 R. A—were in progress. Stores, mules, and bullocks were daily being shipped from Bombay, Kurrachee and the Persian Gulf ports. Altogether, there must have been landed in Abyssinia about 20,000 souls, and nearly that number of animals. For these Colonel Lucas calculated he had about four months' supply, ashore or afloat in the Bay.

THE CAMPAIGN IN ABYSSINIA.

CHAPTER I.

ZOULA, *January 7th*, 1868.

THE first event of importance in the new year was the arrival of His Excellency Sir Robert Napier at Zoula. His Excellency and Staff embarked at Bombay on the afternoon of Saturday, December 21, under the salute due to his rank, amidst many demonstrations of personal respect and lively enthusiasm. H. M. S. *Octavia*, the flag ship of Commodore Heath, C. B., Commanding the East India Station, was reserved to convey the Chief across from Bombay; and on his reaching that vessel's side, a salute was thundered forth and the yards manned—demonstrations which were repeated by the *Highflyer*, *Dryad*, and *Nymph*, the other ships of war in the harbour. As soon as the short twilight had passed away, the harbour, apparently from Karanjah to Elephanta, was one blaze of white and blue light, every ship contributing to the general illumination.

News of His Excellency's departure from Bombay had reached Abyssinia by way of Egypt, so that the probable date of his arrival at Zoula could be calculated with some degree of accuracy; and, but for a short stay at Aden, and a slight accident to the machinery of the *Octavia*, Sir Robert would have been in Annesley Bay on New Year's Day—the day on which he was generally expected. As it was, however, he did not arrive till the morning of January 3rd; and, notwithstanding that several rumours which proved to be without foundation had met with ready credence, and sent Staff officers galloping down to the bunder in a state of great excitement, expecting to meet the Chief, compara-

tively few were aware of His Excellency's actual arrival for some time after the *Octavia* had anchored; and when the news did at last get abroad, many refused to believe it. The absence of the usual salute was adduced as conclusive proof that the report was merely another *fama vana*. As, however, Sir Robert had determined to remain on board for a few days, to receive there the reports of the Heads of Departments, the seventeen guns due to his rank were reserved till he should be leaving the ship to establish his head-quarters on shore. He landed this morning, a salute being fired from the *Octavia* as he left the ship, and another from Colonel Penn's Mountain Train Battery as he stepped upon the pier. A guard of honour, consisting of 100 men of the 4th King's Own, with band and colours, was in attendance, and also a large number of Staff and General officers.

Immediately on his arrival, Sir Robert dissolved the "Reconnoitring Party," which had hitherto been working as a distinct body under General Merewether and Colonel Phayre, and merged it in the Force. Their services, as well as those of the "Advance Force" under Colonel Field, were acknowledged in the following General Order:—

"ANNESLEY BAY, *3rd January* 1868.

"Lieut.-General Sir Robert Napier assumes personal Command of the Troops in Abyssinia this day. Sir Robert Napier congratulates the 'Advance Force' on the progress made in the expedition by the establishment, in spite of great difficulties, of a firm footing at 'Senafe' on the high land of Abyssinia. The Commander-in-Chief has already acknowledged the services of the 'Reconnoitring Party,' which have been marked by the greatest energy and intelligence. Two years' experience of the Command of the Bombay Army and of the high military spirit which animates it, prepared Sir Robert Napier to expect the excellent example set by the 'Advance Force' under Colonel Field. From the moment of their landing they have been indefatigable in promoting the success of the operations by their good conduct and zealous labour in opening roads and preparing the way for the Army. Sir Robert Napier is confident that every soldier in the Force appreciates the

honor of having been selected to carry out the Commands of Her Majesty the Queen of England, and that neither hardships nor dangers will arrest it in pursuit of the objects of the Expedition,—the release of our countrymen detained in a painful captivity, and the vindication of the dignity of Her Majesty's Empire."

On the evening of his arrival His Excellency visited the camp, the various depôts, and the watering place; and next day received a visit from the Pacha in command of the Egyptian fleet at Massowah, who had come to Zoula in his fine frigate, the *Ibrahimea*, to meet and to assist the Chiefs of the English Army. It may be mentioned, before taking leave of the *Octavia*, that Sir Robert became almost at once the especial favourite of the sailors, and that they showed their liking for him in true sailor fashion on Christmas day, by mounting him in a chair and carrying him in triumph round the ship.

The following General Order was published on January 7th, the date on which His Excellency formed his camp on shore:—

"CAMP ZOULA, 7*th January* 1868.

"Lieut.-General Sir Robert Napier, after a personal inspection of the works carried out at Zoula, performs a very grateful duty in recording publicly the credit due to the Engineer Department, under Lieut.-Colonel Wilkins, Chief Engineer; Captain Goodfellow, Field Engineer, and the Companies of Bombay Sappers, for the great progress made in converting a desert shore, at first view utterly devoid of resources, into a very convenient port and depot, by the construction of an excellent stone pier, store sheds and other works, which would have been creditable under very favorable circumstances. In these labors, the most valuable assistance has been afforded by the senior Naval officer, Captain Edye, and the officers and men of the ships under his command, in maintaining a supply of condensed water from the shipping under great difficulties; the erection of condensers on shore, and aiding all Departments to the utmost extent of their resources. The labors of the Sanitary officer, Dr. Lumsdaine, and of the Commissariat officer, Major Mignon, have been equally important and praiseworthy. The Commander-in-Chief is greatly indebted

to Major General Sir Charles Staveley, second in command, for having combined and directed the energies of all Departments, so as to produce the present condition of well-regulated order. The general progress made could only have been accomplished by the hearty and unanimous devotion of all officers and their Departments, for which His Excellency desires to express his warm approbation."

The issue of these orders was made by some the occasion to say that the Commander-in-Chief, now that he had at length reached Abyssinia, where everything was believed to be going wrong through his absence, had done nothing but praise everybody and everything. In the first place, however, it must not be forgotten that Sir Robert Napier did not remain in Bombay till the end of December from choice. However desirable his presence in Abyssinia may have been, it was absolutely necessary that he should remain in India till all preparations there were completed, or had made considerable progress. The same jealous and factious interference with His Excellency's plans, which led to his detention in Bombay, has also to account for the state of affairs which presented itself to him in Abyssinia. Much remained undone which he had hoped would have been performed. In one of his despatches, dated January 7th, he says :— "I do not intend to send any more troops forward until "I have accumulated sufficient supplies at Senafe; that "operation, which I hoped would have been performed "before my arrival, could not take place owing to the "backward state of the land transport." And it was precisely owing to this "backward state of the land transport" that all departments had been in a mess from the first. A double amount of toil and worry had been imposed upon officers, to which the work they could show bore no adequate proportion. But these officers had, one and all of them, done wonders in spite of the difficulties with which they had to contend; and the recognition of their

services contained in the Chief's "order of the day" was as well deserved as it was appropriate.

The anticipated arrival of the Commander-in-Chief led to a general return to Zoula of all officers who could be spared from the front. Among these were General Merewether, Colonel Phayre, and M. Munzinger. They had, in company with Colonel Wilkins, Dr. Martin, Dr. Krapf, and escorted by a company of the 3rd Bombay Light Cavalry, under Colonel Loch, just completed a tour of reconnaissance as far as Addigerat, the result of which was on the whole very satisfactory. Between Senafe and Addigerat moderate supplies of grain, with plenty of grass and water, could, they found, be procured without difficulty; and the work to be done by the Sappers would be mere child's play in comparison to that found necessary in the case of the Sooroo and Rarayguddy Passes. Addigerat may be approached from Senafe by two roads—the king's road and the caravan road. Both of these were traversed, the former in going to Addigerat and the latter in returning from it; but as the king's road was, as one might expect, the better of the two, and consequently the one selected, a description of it only will be sufficient. By this route, which lies a little to the left of Barakit, across the south end of the Mai Muna valley, the distance between the two places is about forty miles, which was accomplished by General Merewether and party in two days, but which, they advised, should be divided for the army into three stages. These stages were from Senafe to Goona Goona, twelve miles; Goona Goona to Focada, sixteen miles; Focada to Addigerat, twelve miles. Immediately beyond Senafe lies the Shumazana plain, where the Mai Muna takes its rise,—a river which, it may be mentioned, falls into the Ragooley, and not into the sea, as represented in some of the maps. Here, as a matter of course, there was found to be plenty of water; and there being

plenty of water, also plenty of vegetation. The whole plain was one vast sea of grass; several promising fields of young wheat were seen, and from the good years both Tigre and Agame had lately enjoyed, no doubt was entertained by General Merewether but that grain was stored in that part of the country, and that it would be forthcoming as soon as the chiefs had unequivocally declared to the people their desire that the expedition should be cordially aided by them.

Addigerat is the chief town of the province of Agame; it is of no great extent, and derives its importance chiefly from its being a residence of the Sabagadis family, and the centre of a large fertile district. There is a market held there every Monday, when several hundred people congregate, bringing for sale corn, cows, sheep, ponies, hides, and pottery. The accounts received regarding this fair did not lead one to expect other than a very poor display indeed; it is, however, one of the "sights" of Addigerat. The ruler of Agame is a prisoner in the hands of Wakshum Gobazye, in Lasta, having been carried off by that chieftain when he visited the country last year, because he had, or fancied he had, occasion to doubt his northern vassal's loyalty. This led to the revolt of Prince Kassa of Tigre, who is connected with the Sabagadis, a revolt which was successful, Kassa having established himself as "Head of all the Chiefs of the Kingdom of Tigre." The Sabagadis family has always been befriended by the English. Salt and others espoused their interests thirty years ago; and it was a wonderful coincidence that, after long years of adversity and exile, a member of that house should succeed to power just at the very time when he could aid his benefactor's nation, to do which he had never had any opportunity before, and might probably never have had another. This chief, *suo motu*, sent into the English camp a confidential agent, named Meertcha Workee, with assurances

of good-will and sympathy. This Meertcha was not unacquainted with the English nation, its history, and its power, having received a good English education at the Free General Assembly's Institution in Bombay, under the Reverend Dr. Wilson, where two of his nephews are at present prosecuting their studies. Dr. Wilson, knowing that his old pupil was in Tigre, sent letters to him through Colonel Phayre; but these were never despatched by the Colonel lest they might fall into wrong hands, and bring to grief a man who would undoubtedly befriend the expedition if he could. It was, therefore, a surprise as pleasant for Merewether and Phayre, as it was unexpected by them, to find Meertcha make his appearance at Senafe, as it were, to bid them welcome into Abyssinia proper. Surprised as was Colonel Phayre thus to meet Meertcha, Meertcha was by no means surprised to meet Colonel Phayre;—"The Abyssinians," said he, "have always laughed at the idea of a foreign army ever being able to cross those mountains; but he had told them—'Yes, the English have said they'll do it, and you'll see they will.'" It was known, however, that the Prince of Tigre did not remain long of the same mind, and was likely to give heed to lying reports regarding the real object of the English in leading an army into Abyssinia. It was known also that lying reports were being industriously circulated—even there was strong reason to fear, by the very Coptish priest who carried the letter of advice to Theodorus from the Egyptians, advising His Majesty to give up the prisoners. The mendacious scoundrel had at this date last been heard of at Antalo, and it was hoped and believed he would be unable to proceed farther. Hitherto he seemed to have experienced no great difficulty, as he gave himself out to be a relative of the late Abuna, the Head of the Abyssinian Church.

Rumours were as rife at this time, as they had ever been, regarding Theodorus and those interesting individuals

Menelek, King of Shoa, and Wakshum Gobazye, Chief of Lasta. Reuter had informed his subscribers that Theodorus had burned Debra Tabor, and was marching upon Magdala. The first item of intelligence was without any foundation whatever; and the second, though true enough, could hardly be termed "news," seeing that it was well known that Theodorus had been "marching on Magdala" for the last six months at least. But private letters received by General Merewether from Rassam, Cameron, and Prideaux, contained news of which there was no reason to doubt the truth, though it was different to what most people hoped and expected to receive. The latest of these letters was dated December 16, and reported that the King of Shoa had relinquished all attempts to take Magdala, and had returned to his own country, giving out that provisions failed him. There may have been some little truth in his statement, especially as he had dawdled about for a long time among the Wullo Gallas, settling the disputes of the rival queens, Workeit and the more powerful Masteeat. But the fact is, nobody who knew anything of the strength of that fortress and of the resources of Menelek, ever believed that he could gain possession of it unless aided by treachery from within. However, having come to within five miles of Magdala, Menelek pitched his camp on a hill over against it, drew out his forces in array, and fired a salute from matchlocks. Theodore's lieutenants (of whom there were four in Magdala—the one to watch the other) held a council of war, and decided to stand by their lord, and this resolution having been communicated to Menelek, he too called his chiefs together, upbraided them with having deceived him, and gave orders to withdraw at once. Mr. Rassam had been in communication with him, and His Majesty informed him of his intention to return to his own country, alleging as his sole reason for this that provisions had failed him, and intimating a firm resolve to return in

three weeks' time. About his departure there could be no difference of opinion, and there was very little about the probability of his return.

Wakshum Gobazye was meanwhile in his own territory of Lasta; and Theodorus was "marching on Magdala." When last heard of he was at Kummera Dengea, some thirty miles from Debra Tabor, still sadly put to by want of transport. The letters of the 16th ultimo, referred to above, stated that His Majesty had now given up the idea of crossing the range of hills lying between Debra Tabor and Magdala, and was making a detour by a more northerly route, the difficulties of which were not so great. By this route he would have to pass through the province of Lasta; and it was looked upon as just within the bounds of possibility that Wakshum might come upon him unawares in some pass, and join battle with him. Had he done so, the result could hardly be doubted, as Theodorus had in reality but some 8,000 of an army, while his adversary could bring six times that number against him.

Such being the state of affairs, it never seemed but that Sir Robert Napier would certainly have to go to Magdala for the captives; and plans were formed accordingly. General Merewether, whose views were always cheery, if not even sanguine, believed that a sufficiently large force could reach Magdala by the end of February, before Theodorus could possibly get there. This was regarded as the most favourable issue of events it was at all reasonable to expect. In order to accomplish this end, it was agreed that all heavy guns would have to be left behind at Senafe, and such troops as might not be considered necessary to hold say Addigerat, Atsbi, and Antalo, while the lucky few pressed on to Magdala. It is due to the gallant Merewether to state, in this connection, that though his expectations were somewhat too sanguine, they were very much nearer the

mark than those entertained by nine-tenths of the Force. All believed that the advance would be made with as great rapidity as possible, and that it would nevertheless be made systematically as before; a move would not be allowed from one depôt until intimation had been received that the next was ready. The zeal and efficiency of the Commissariat Department afforded abundant guarantee that no delay would be occasioned by it; yet there was the terrible uncertainty as regarded everything beyond, and the terrible failure of the Transport Train. These last considerations kept the hopes of the majority very low. It seems almost invidious to particularize individual officers as deserving of praise when all did so well; but it was impossible not to be struck with what had been accomplished by Major Mignon, who had been in charge of the Commissariat till relieved by Colonel Lucas, and all, too, without any adequate establishment. His splendid services were in every one's mouth.

The Transport Train—an organization closely allied to the Commissariat Department, though, as will sometimes happen in the best regulated families, there was not much love lost between them—was now beginning to give promise of early efficiency. This department had had very many difficulties to struggle against, and the inconveniences which were caused through its not having been able to spring from the head of a Jupiter in the full stature of manhood, show the almost absolute necessity of maintaining at least the nucleus of a Transport Train, if that system of transport is to be adopted in future campaigns. Major Warden had now been in Zoula about a week, with his establishment, and what he had already accomplished, and the zeal with which his officers were seconding his efforts, left no room to doubt their will to make their department efficient; and in a little time it was believed they would prove also their ability to

do so. Only it was apparent they must have more muleteers than one to eight sturdy and eminently stubborn animals. The Train was at this time composed of about 7,800 mules and tattoos, and 1,900 camels, of which nearly 500 were sick, and the remainder employed in carrying stores to the front. Some assistance in the way of transport was being received from the Shohos, who conveyed stores to Senafe by the Huddas route, receiving a dollar and a half for every bullock load they carried safely. This they never failed to do, for though no guard was placed over them they delivered up the goods in as good order as kafila goods are ever delivered.

The water difficulty had by this time in great measure disappeared, and, though the water was none of the best, there was at Zoula enough for man and beast, and a little to spare. The credit for this was mainly due to Captain Edye of H. M. S. *Satellite*, who, with his officers, had done almost everything in connection with the water supply. A hundred and seventy tons a day were being landed from the harbour, and this, with the exercise of due care, was sufficient to provide a drink for every animal twice a day. It was regarded as a good omen for the year, that New Year's Day should have been the first day on which the watering was properly managed.

The mortality which had made, and still continued to make, such havoc among the mules and horses, naturally attracted anxious attention both in India and in England. Notwithstanding the unremitting care and the experience of Mr. Lamb and his assistants in the Veterinary department, gaps were found in the ranks every morning, although the animals had manifested no symptoms of illness the night before. Various were the conjectures made as to the nature and cause of the malady, and it was some time before these could be accurately ascertained. Mr. H. B. Hallen, Principal Veterinary Surgeon in the

Bombay Presidency, (formerly Principal and Professor at the Royal Veterinary College, Edinburgh, and Professor of Veterinary Surgery to the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland), was specially deputed to give his attention to the matter. From close observations and *post mortem* examinations made by this gentleman, the following particulars regarding the epidemic were ascertained :—

The disease was of a low febrile type, generally resulting in effusion of the pericardium *(hydrops pericardii)*; it was subtle and insidious in attack, and even urgent symptoms could hardly be detected by the non-professional eye, in the earlier stages. The *post mortem* examinations manifested results to be expected from such a malady—that the disease was well known to the natives, and that no equine animal could be considered safe from attack between the coast and the first plateau on the highlands; nor indeed, for some days after, as the seeds of the disease might have been contracted in transit. The malady was more prevalent and more malignant after the rains—that is to say about the months of January and February. It assumed either a mild or very severe type, according to the amount of time that elapsed between the period of attack and the full formation of *hydrops pericardii*. The natives asserted the mucous membranes of the air passages were sometimes so affected as to produce closure of the air passages by effusion, and hence death. But it was thought that these latter cases were cases of acute glanders, associated with poverty and privation, and perhaps a more or less severe attack of the prevalent disease. As the predisposing cause was doubtless climatic, or connected with impurity of water, it was apparent that horses and mules should be removed to the hills as speedily as possible. Mr. Hallen, therefore, recommended that the beasts of burden between Zoula and Senafe should consist only of *ruminantia*, and that cavalry

and artillery horses be hurried up to Senafe, immediately on their arrival. In some cases where the disease assumed a mild form, suffusion from the extremities was met with, in consequence of the same cause in operation—a low febrile state. In these cases *hydrops pericardii* occurred to a less extent, and with supporting treatment and the judicious use of stimulants, success generally attended the treatment. Arrack and quinine were most frequently administered—rather expensive medicines it must be confessed. The disease was not considered contagious.

Almost as a matter of course, sensational reports, emanating from some idle yet fertile imagination, or founded upon the most commonplace occurrences, were in circulation every day. At one time, the Shohos were represented to have attacked the Pioneers and working parties; at another the Abyssinians in the highlands were said to be mustering to oppose the advance of the Force beyond the Pass. Take the following as examples:—

One morning at Senafe, when the officers of the Pioneer party, who had just returned from their tour to Addigerat, were enjoying breakfast, a Shoho rushed into their tent, and assured them, with all the vehemence of voice and gesture he could command, that a countless host of Abyssinians was just upon them, and that they could not escape being devoured unless an immediate onset were made upon the enemy. Not so much alarmed as it was fondly hoped they would be, General Merewether and Col. Phayre thanked the excited Shoho for the great interest he took in their safety, but added that breakfast must be attended to before anything else. By and bye a small body of the 3rd Light Cavalry were sent out a few miles to ascertain what foundation there was for the fellow's report; and it was discovered that a band of Agami, with arms of the most heterogeneous kind, were passing on their lawful errand, viz., to punish the Shohos for a raid made by them into

the territory of the Agami last year. The Shohos knew well that fire and sword would be their portion, and that speedily, unless the advance of the Agami were checked, and so endeavoured to persuade General Merewether that it was the Advance Brigade of the British Army that was really in danger, hoping by this means to secure their own safety through the aid of the well-armed Light Cavalry.

Many more instances of similar mendacity could be cited, but one of recent date will suffice. A servant of Mr. Flad's arrived at Senafe towards the end of December, and stated that he had come from Theodore's camp, by way of Massowah; that the king had carried off all the captives from Magdala, and gone to Kummera Dengea. It took him, he said, eighteen days to travel from Kummera Dengea to Massowah, where he arrived on the 18th of December. He likewise stated that he and his companions had three letters given them to carry to Massowah—one from Flad, another from Rassam, and the third from the King of Shoa; but that these letters had been taken from them, and his companions made prisoners by soldiers in Begemeder. According to this man's story, Theodorus had left all his guns behind him, in order to facilitate his progress, had stayed three days at Magdala, and had assured Rassam that he intended to convey him and his fellows to Tigre, and there deliver them up in safety. On being questioned as to dates, however, his story completely broke down; for he positively asserted that these events occurred in October, which was impossible, seeing that letters had been received from the captives at Magdala, written in the middle of December. It was considered by no means improbable that the man might be a spy from Theodorus, so he was conducted over the camp, told to make himself acquainted with all he saw, and had a copy of Sir Robert Napier's proclamation given him to carry to his supposed master.

The distribution of the troops in Abyssinia on the arrival of Sir Robert Napier was as follows :—

At Zoula.

Detachment Sind Horse.
A-21st Royal Artillery with Mountain Train.
B-21st Royal Artillery Do. Do.
1-4th King's Own Regiment.
3rd Regiment, N. I.
25th ,, ,,
23rd Punjaub Pioneers.

At Koomaylee.

G-14th Royal Artillery.
4 Companies 33rd Foot (under orders for Senafe).

In the Passes.

1st Beloo̊h Battalion.
Bombay Sappers and Miners.
Madras do. do.
Two companies Punjaub Pioneers.
Detachment Marine Battalion.

At Senafe.

10th Company Royal Engineers (Head Quarters).
Head Quarters and six Companies 33rd Foot.
Detachment Sind Horse.
3rd Light Cavalry.
10th Regiment N. I.
1st Company Native Artillery (Major Marett's).
One Company Bombay Sappers and Miners.

Much as the troops desired to push on to the front, a desire which officers of all ranks shared equally with the men, no moves were allowed till the depôt at Senafe should

be well supplied with provisions, which it was not at present. Attention was, therefore, devoted almost entirely to the forwarding of stores to Senafe and to the depôts in the Pass. A new depôt was formed at Maiyen, or Undal Wells, near the Guinea Fowl Plain, where the clearing and sinking of wells had fortunately been the means of providing what turned out to be an abundant supply of water. The formation of this depôt divided a long march of 31 miles, between Upper Sooroo and Raraguddy, into two of 14 and 17 respectively.

The elephants shipped from Bombay by the *Compta*, about which some anxiety was beginning to be felt, arrived safely on January 6th, and were in excellent condition. They were landed next morning, and set to carrying arrack in kegs to Senafe, on behalf of the Commissariat.

The heat at this season was extremely oppressive during the mornings, till the sea-breeze set in; yet the health of the troops was all that could be desired. At Senafe the thermometer fell as low as 29 degrees Fah.

Telegraphic communication with Koomaylee was established at 11 o'clock on the morning of January 7th. The difficulties of the telegraph staff were greatly augmented by the thieving propensities of the Shohos, who had already discovered the value of the copper wire used for the line. Every other day these rascals walked off with a few hundred yards of wire, in spite of the measures instituted to prevent them.

CHAPTER II.

ZOULA, *January* 14*th.*

Sir Robert Napier having found the provisioning of the depôts in a less forward state than he had expected, determined, as has been said, to remain at Zoula, and not to proceed to the front until at least two months' provisions had been laid in at Senafe. The wisdom and prudence of this resolution, indeed the absolute necessity for it, became more and more apparent as the difficulty of thus provisioning Senafe was experienced. The magnitude of the work was only fully realized after a week or so had been almost entirely devoted to it; and even after that time, though the Transport Train had been working with tolerable regularity, few, who really knew anything of the matter, would have ventured to say when the indispensable preliminary to the Chief's departure from Zoula, and an advance into Abyssinia proper, was likely to be complied with. All agreed it would take at least another week, and many thought it might require a fortnight; the whole thing evidently depended upon the Transport Train and the Shoho carriers. The question was solely one of transport; everything was consequently done to enable the Train to devote its whole energy and attention to that work.

That the ranks of the baggage animals might be thinned as little as possible, only one mule was allowed to each officer between Zoula and Senafe, and it was now known that beyond that station a still further reduction of kit would be necessary. Besides this, no mules were withdrawn from the Train except under the most pressing circumstances; officers desirous of proceeding beyond Zoula had first to obtain express permission from Sir Charles Staveley, the Second in Command. Between Zoula and Koomaylee, 1,248 camels were employed,

so divided into reliefs that 312 started daily with their loads; and beyond Koomaylee 4,000 mules and the pack bullocks were at work, 400 of the former starting daily for Senafe. Since the arrival of Colonel Warden some sort of system and order had been established in the corps, and had already been productive of desirable results; yet it was felt that unless the resources of the Transport Department acquired greater elasticity than they had yet manifested, it was impossible to look forward to the rapid advance to be made on Magdala without serious apprehension. It was feared that the Transport Train might delay the force beyond Senafe, or prove unable to keep supplies well to the front, in which case it could not but be regarded as a most expensive failure. Having thus to wait at Zoula till provisions were sent on, was very irksome and annoying; but it was decidedly preferable to any delay beyond Senafe, when time would be doubly precious, the distance from the base greater, and the difficulty of overtaking arrears consequently very much increased.

Batches of mules continued to arrive from Suez and elsewhere, and but little time was allowed them to make themselves acquainted with the geography of the jungle, as mules had been wont to do a month ago. From the ship they were bundled into a lighter, from the lighter to the bunder, from the bunder to the harness depôt, where, after an amount of kicking and plunging which varied with the physical condition and bringing-up of the animals, they allowed themselves to be saddled and handed over to their taskmasters. It was hoped that beyond Senafe, at least as far as Antalo, sufficient supplies of grain, flour, grass, &c. might be drawn from the country itself; and no effort was spared to secure this. Meertcha, Kassa's agent, who was at Senafe, was invited to visit Sir Robert Napier at Zoula; there he had all the wishes of His Excellency in the matter of supplies fully explained to him, and was sent

back to use his endeavour, by promises of immediate and liberal payment for every ounce of grain and pound of grass, to attract supplies toward Senafe, Addigerat, and Antalo. All hoped that these efforts might be attended with success, for then the work of the Transport Corps would be simplified tenfold, and the advance of the army facilitated in a still greater degree. The knowledge which must have spread through the country, that having plenty of stores at Zoula *en route* to Senafe, the English were perfectly independent of them, did not, of course, make the Abyssinians more difficult to treat with; but the contrary. This, however, is not saying much; for from the day of the arrival of the English among them till the day of their departure, these people maintained the most fanciful and extortionate prices for everything exposed for sale.

The elephants, having been placed under the charge of Lieutenant Ochterlony, were properly managed and worked to advantage, and so proved a most important accession to the locomotive power at Zoula. When these animals left Bombay, the general impression was that their work would consist in dragging heavy guns up the Rarayguddy and other Passes, where artillery horses were unequal to the task. At first that constituted a very small and exceptional part of their duties, as there was not much great gun-work in connection with the early days of the expedition. "Shah Bux," "Roostum Khan," and their brethren were for a long time mostly employed in the less picturesque but far more important occupation of conveying commissariat stores from the bunder to the various depôts. Everything which it would have been difficult to load on mules or camels was reserved for the elephants, which carried twelve or fourteen hundredweight with ease; so long, however, as the distances were short, their loads were not more than half that weight, owing to the time required to load them properly. The Shohos soon became accustomed to the elephants;

and, though they may have continued to regard them with much surprise, the feeling of terror caused by their first appearance almost entirely disappeared after the first few days. An elephant at work was something hitherto quite undreamt of in their philosophy; and when they were first ordered to assist in loading them, they either ran away, or approached the animal with fear and trembling, bestowing infinitely more attention upon the movements of his trunk and tail than upon the bale they were assisting to place on his back. Now, however, that the Shohos had become accustomed to them, an elephant might use his trunk to flick off a troublesome fly, or signify when he considered his load sufficiently large, without causing a violent panic among the natives, and leading to the temporary cessation of the work in hand.

According to latest accounts from Magdala, dated December 23, Theodorus was continuing his march upon Magdala, though his progress was so slow and his movements so fettered, both by the passive resistance of his own guns and baggage, and by the active opposition of first one rebel and then another, that a considerable space of time must evidently elapse before he could have the captives once more actually in his hands. He was at the above-mentioned date in the province of Wadela, to the north-west of Magdala, and the road by which he was then travelling was the easiest by which he could approach the fort. But the Chief of Dalanta, through whose territory he had to pass, had long been up in arms against him, and, small as were the resources at his disposal compared with those of Wakshum Gobazye or the runaway King of Shoa, this man seems to have thrown more difficulties in the way of Theodore's advance than either of those more pretentious potentates ever did. If the Chief of Dalanta had not many men who could handle the sword and spear to advantage, he had a considerable number about him not

unfamiliar with the use of the spade and the crowbar; and so, both by cutting up the road and throwing down the bridges, he did all in his power to place obstacles in the way of the King's progress. It was of course impossible to ascertain what success attended his efforts; for even if it had been ascertained (as indeed it was by future intelligence) that Theodorus was making but very slow progress on the road, that would not have proved his inability to advance more rapidly had he so chosen. Beyond the prisoners there was nothing for him in Magdala; he could not maintain an army there, and without an army he could not subsist a single day; it was therefore no object to him to reach Magdala quickly, provided he reached it in time to secure the captives, while his soldiers and slaves rejoiced in the *carte blanche* he gave them to live on the fat of the lands through which they were passing.

It was, at the same time, considered by some to be probable that Theodorus had been moving as rapidly as he could, at any rate since intimation of the expedition reached him; and it was very certain his exertions would be redoubled as soon as he learned of Sir Robert Napier's actual descent upon him. His Majesty's intentions were an unfathomable mystery to every one; many as were the guesses hazarded, no one would have ventured to speak with any certainty as to what his next move might be. If, said some, having secured Magdala, Theodorus would but stay there and offer to treat for the surrender of the captives; or, entrenching his position, "let the English come on, and call me a woman if I do not show them I am a king," the end of the difficult and expensive campaign could be foreseen to within a week or two at most. But, on the other hand, said others, should His Majesty be plied with evil counsels, and resolve to sacrifice everything in order to give the invaders trouble, and to frustrate as much as possible the success of the ex-

pedition, then he might not improbably carry his captives away to the hill country west of Lake Dembea, and make his bed with the fox, as he had done before, leaving the English to enjoy the rains while they lasted, and the chase when they were over. Widely different as these courses were, none but the most opinionative ventured to say which Theodorus might adopt.

The position of Wakshum Gobazye was, at this time, as it had ever been, safe almost to the verge of cowardice. Without showing the slightest intention of boldly attacking Theodorus, he was evidently bent upon annoying him if he could do so without risk of attack, and attack must have involved defeat. With the main body of his army at a place called Lalliliela, Wakshum sent forward bodies of men to lie in ambush on the tops of the hills and cliffs by which he knew Theodorus must pass, and from there they pelted him with large stones, a mode of proceeding which was tolerably safe for themselves, but which must have been horribly unpleasant to His Majesty. Theodorus, instead of being humbled by these adversities, actual and prospective, was, according to all accounts, becoming even a more confirmed lunatic than ever. When in his fits, he slew inoffending wretches by the score, and burned others almost indiscriminately; his lucid moments he devoted to the invention of some new and more horrible kind of torture. His 'latest' in that line was said to be, to drive a pointed stake through his victim, nailing him to the earth, and then order loaded carts to be driven over his writhing body.

No further communications had, as yet, been received from any of the Abyssinian Chiefs, but there seemed no reason to anticipate anything but cordial assistance. The Abyssinians, with their usual jealousy and dislike of strangers, naturally refrained from manifesting any desire to have dealings with us, till their Chiefs

should set the example; no doubt was entertained, but that they would then readily aid those whom it was so much for their interest to aid, and whom they could not effectually have resisted if they would. But had not the force been sufficiently large to render opposition altogether out of the question, there was no want of indications that it would have been subjected to serious annoyance. An example of this tendency to opposition, prompted perhaps by a desire for plunder, had occurred a few days before. Captain Pottinger, R.A., of the Quarter Master General's Department, with a small surveying party, had been engaged on an examination of the route between Senafe and the Ragooley ravine, when a band of Abyssinians, who had been watching them for some time, led them to understand that their presence in Abyssinia was not wanted; that they could not be allowed to proceed further; and that any attempt to do so would cost them their lives. Being numerically weak and unprepared to deal with a body of assailants, and having definite instructions to provoke no hostilities, Captain Pottinger very prudently left off the work of reconnaissance in that direction and returned to Senafe.

The works at present in progress at Zoula were a pier for the landing of commissariat stores, commissariat sheds, the extension of the tramway system, and the general conservation of the port, which had been on the preceding Sunday seriously threatened with submersion. All these works were greatly needed; but perhaps the most urgent was the last, for spring tides will consult no one's convenience as to the time of their coming and the extent of their rise. On Sunday the 12th inst., the spring tide had risen some six or eight inches higher than any former one was known to have done, and so not only overflowed the pier, submerging the goods that lay thereon, but washed along the dry bed of the Huddas, and found means of drenching

also the commissariat and other stores piled by the side of the tramway. All round the depôt was one sheet of water, in some places several feet in depth, and separated from the sea merely by the embankment which prevented a general inundation. The damage done to stores was slight, the precautions taken to protect them from less extensive invasions of the sea having served greatly to remove them from the reach of this unusually high tide. Working parties from the Native Infantry regiments soon threw up an embankment to keep the water in the river bed in future, and all stores were removed to a drier locality. The commissariat pier was also urgently required to facilitate the landing of stores; indeed some difficulty was anticipated in landing stores sufficiently fast to meet the daily consumption, unless this pier were available soon. Half its length was therefore finished, that the one section might be used while the other was being proceeded with. The sheds, too, were fast approaching completion. The tramway was making as rapid progress as could be expected, seeing that none of the regular railway contingent had yet arrived, and that the work was being executed by soldiers and others whose experience in the way of plate laying was absolutely *nil*. The railway bridge across the Huddas afforded work for fatigue parties from all regiments. The construction of the telegraph could hardly now be classed among the works in progress at Zoula, since it was already in working order as far as Koomaylee, and eight miles beyond. It was of comparatively little use, however, until it had been extended to Senafe.

The wonderful absence hitherto of epidemic and disease of any kind among the men of the different regiments and the coolies, afforded strong cause for congratulation and thankfulness. Unfortunately, as it appeared at the time, though there was difference of opinion as to the culpability, the want of due care on the part of the authorities at Calcutta,

in sending to see a vessel loaded with coolies and imperfectly ventilated, marred the success which strict sanitary precautions on the Bombay side had secured. The *India* left Calcutta with a cargo of between four and five hundred coolies, of whom ten per cent. died during the voyage, and forty per cent. were prostrated with typhoid fever. Fever seems to have broken out among them soon after leaving Calcutta, but not to have assumed its ultimate virulence till the vessel had passed Aden, when two or three died daily. There was no European officer in charge, and only two native medical attendants, one of whom was suddenly attacked himself, and the other is said to have been totally unfit for duty from some other cause. The vessel was put in quarantine, conveyed to the end of the Bay, a separate camp formed for the coolies, and a commissioned officer and surgeon (Dr. Straker) placed in charge. The deaths altogether amounted to about fifty. Strict sanitary arrangements, together with a liberal allowance of medical comforts, soon told their own tale among the invalids, bringing them round rapidly; but what work could these attenuated creatures have been fit for, for at least a month to come? The *India*, in the opinion of many, was remarkably ill-fitted for the work for which she had been chartered; her lower deck was represented to be "as close as a box." On the other hand, as will be seen from another chapter, experienced naval officers considered the ship well suited for transport service.

The Mountain Train Battery stationed at Zoula was kept at shell practice almost every morning in order to familiarize the men with their new and wonderful weapons. Colonel Milward, one of the most able and advanced artillerists of the day, came from England in charge, his services having been specially requested by Sir Robert Napier. With Colonel Milward came also Captain Nolan, R. A., as instructor. Different opinions were at first expressed re-

garding the merit of the practice. The verdict first returned was a very disappointing one, being to the effect that the 'Theodores' by no means fulfilled the expectations that had been formed regarding them. But this, it soon appeared, was the verdict pronounced only by the younger members of the Force, who considered no piece of ordnance up to the mark unless it could, like the famous Armstrong, knock off a goose's head at four miles and a half. Now the Mountain Train six-pounders were never intended to accomplish such feats in the way of range; and the same precision of aim is never sought to be attained with shell as with round shot. The verdict of the "old soldier" was that the practice with these guns was exceedingly good; for not only was the ground in front of and around the target ploughed and harrowed by the shell, but the target itself was well marked in several places, from a distance of over a thousand yards. If such was the result when the object aimed at was but a small target, the result of the practice when it came to be directed against the face of a hill or a body of infantry or cavalry would, every one felt assured, be as destructive and unpleasant to the latter as the latest arrival from Shoeburyness or Woolwich could well desire. The mules, which were expected to rear and plunge desperately when the firing commenced, behaved in the most disappointingly correct manner, taking no notice of the noise or clouds of "villainous saltpetre" in which they were enveloped.

The hospital ships *Queen of the South*, *Golden Fleece*, and *Mauritius* had all arrived from England by this time, fitted up and equipped in the most perfect manner. Luckily the berths were all but empty, the health of the troops continuing remarkably good. To such a pitch of fineness had the line separating "Black" from "White" hitherto been drawn in India, that the Indian service never for a moment dreamed that their sick would be admitted on

board these floating hospitals on the same terms as those regulating the admission of patients from the British service; and so incredible did it seem that such could possibly be intended, that it took two or three General Orders to dispel all doubts on the point. "Blacks" and "Whites" were however in this instance to be treated *nullo discrimine;* accommodation was available on board for the sick of both services. Also European clerks and Warrant Officers employed in the public offices in camp, could receive medical aid, subject to a charge of two shillings *per diem* on account of subsistance.

The Turkish frigate *Ibrahimea* was still in Annesley Bay, and Abdul Kadir, the Turkish Admiral in command, was as prodigal of his hospitality as ever. On January 13, he entertained at dinner Sir Robert Napier, the heads of departments, and a large number of other officers; and the preparations made for their reception surpassed in magnificence those which had completely taken his guests by surprise on a previous occasion. The vessel was one blaze of light from her deck to her topmost spar, and as the night was pitch dark for some time, the effect of the illumination was extremely grand. Dinner was served in the best European style; the wines were choice and abundant; and the Faithful were the most pleasant of hosts, mingling with their guests at table, and manifesting the most advanced notions regarding the promotion of enjoyment and hilarity on festive occasions.

The following figures, taken from a return submitted to Sir Charles Staveley, who laboured constantly to promote the efficiency of the Transport Corps, both by improving the water supply and by every other method which suggested itself to him, may be useful. The number of men (including fighting men and followers) to be supplied with water daily at Zoula was at this date 9,000, and the number of animals 2,750. Allowing two gallons

to each man, and a little for wastage, and six gallons to each animal, the total quantity of water consumed daily thus amounted to about 35,000 gallons. On the 13th inst., the naval department landed 27,000 gallons, and the daily average for the past week exceeds 30,000 gallons. This result was mainly due to Captain Edye, of H. M. S. *Satellite*, and to the officers and men who constantly worked so zealously under him.

Some dissatisfaction was experienced in Bombay at the detention there of the head of the Native Field Hospital at Zoula. Luckily the gentleman's services were not missed in Abyssinia; however that did not justify his being detained by some crotchety Secretary or Department. It was absurd, however, to strain at a gnat, after swallowing so many camels. Those who were interested in medical matters might have done well to interrogate the head of the Commissariat Department in Bombay, why his own attention, or if that were out of the question, the attention of an intelligent and efficient officer was not given to seeing the equipments for the various Field Hospitals supplied according to indent, and in time to be forwarded with each battery or regiment, as ought to have been the case. This was a question of even greater importance than the detention for a day or two of one or two doctors. The fact is that the greatest dilatoriness was manifested in the equipping of the Field Hospitals; so much so, that two Batteries of Artillery from Kirkee arrived at Zoula without any hospital equipments whatever; the 33rd Regiment from Kurrachee did the same; the 4th King's Own brought theirs with them it is true, but packed in tremendous iron-clamped boxes it would have taken more than one camel to carry, instead of in boxes weighing 80 lbs. as was specially requested by Dr. Currie, and as is always done in cases of the kind. The consequence was that boxes had to be made in Abyssinia as could best be managed, regardless of the

waste of time and medicines. Had Colonel Dunsterville given a little more attention to these and many more matters that might be mentioned, and a little less, perhaps, to the affairs of the Land Transport Train, which could have been managed better without him, the result, it is fair to hope, would not have been for the worse.

The health of the troops, both European and Native, continued remarkably good. In the native hospital on January 13, there were 226 cases; but these were chiefly surgical cases, the seeds of which had been brought from Bombay or elsewhere. Of the European troops only 63 were in the hospitals at Zoula, or about three per cent. of the present strength. This was truly wonderful, considering that every man almost had been hard-worked, carrying loads, or doing fatigue duty of some kind, under the blazing sun. At Senafe the sick list was still more limited; the men felt themselves re-invigorated and equal to any amount of marching and road-making before they had got more than half-way up the Pass.

There were of course very few moves among the troops during the week preceding the date of this letter. The Pioneers had gone on—one Company to work in the Sooroo defile and another to relieve the Madras Sappers and Miners at Koomaylee. The left wing of this fine regiment was at present in harbour. The Sind Horse had all arrived, and were being sent on in detachments, taking charge of provisions or treasure. On their arrival at Senafe, they were to proceed to a station fourteen miles beyond it (Goona Goona) where it was hoped more grain might be obtained. At this time the grain brought into Senafe from the country barely sufficed to maintain one regiment of cavalry.

CHAPTER III.

ZOULA, *January 23rd.*

Contrary to expectation, the third week in January found the head quarters of the Force still at Zoula, Sir Robert Napier having determined not to advance until he received information from the Commissariat department, that Senafe was provided with supplies to meet all demands that might be made upon it for the next four months at least. This had, ever since His Excellency's arrival, been to be accomplished in 'ten days;' but, notwithstanding all the exertions that had been put forth in this one direction, it was impossible to believe that anything like the quantity of provisions first thought of had yet been laid in. The delay, however, was now becoming too serious a matter to be longer endured; a certain store of supplies had been provided; and means were thought of to render this sufficient, in order not to detain His Excellency longer at the coast.

The necessary arrangements for his departure had consequently been going on for several days; and, though a short postponement might, of course, be made at the last moment, it was expected that he would proceed to Senafe in the last week in January. No officers had for some time been allowed to proceed beyond Zoula, if they could by any possibility be detained there; and when the time came that they must advance, only one mule was allowed for transport, and all servants were disallowed, except they could handle the hook and act as grass-cutters. Every follower whose services could be dispensed with was sent down from Senafe, *en route* for Bombay, and the rations of both European and Indian troops were for a time reduced. The heads of all departments did not accompany the Commander-in-Chief to Senafe, but only Colonel

Dillon, Military Secretary, His Excellency's personal staff, Colonel Thesiger, who had arrived two days before as Deputy Adjutant General, and Captain Holland, who was from the first in charge of the Quarter Master General's Office. All this, of course, was preparatory to an advance beyond Senafe, and upon Magdala, with all speed. A column was under orders to leave Senafe, *en route* for Addigerat on January 26, where it was expected to arrive on or about the 1st proximo. This column consisted of a Wing of the 33rd Regiment, Wing 10th N. I., squadron 3rd Light Cavalry, and Colonel Penn's Battery.

Now that Zoula was to be no longer the head-quarters of the force till the expedition was over, few indeed were sorry to leave it. Notwithstanding that it could boast much of civilization—much of homeliness, in its railway, its smoking chimneys, its store-houses, its beautiful bay, and above all the fleet that was riding at anchor there, it was not the sort of place that one left with regret, or turned back and waved parting adieux to : the prospect of exchanging its sun, its sand, its dust, and its eternal sameness for the cooler atmosphere, the varying scenes, the vast unknown, and the uncertainty that then surrounded everything beyond those hills that lay dark and silent and sullen in the distance, filled one with emotions as pleasing as they were new and indescribable. To the future alone, which "hides in its good hap and sorrow," it was left to determine with what emotions the force should return.

Unexpected as had been the somewhat protracted stay made by Sir Robert Napier at Zoula, a moment's reflection will show that it could not prudently have been avoided. What were the circumstances? Troops had been being hurried to Abyssinia, many of them inadequately provided with suitable clothing, in such numbers and with such rapidity as to tax to the very utmost the energy and scanty resources of every depart-

ment of the army there. They arrived also before any suitable provision could be made for their reception; and consequently a mere hand-to-mouth system of working was all that could be attained. The Commissariat department, notwithstanding the extraordinary working capabilities of Major Mignon, was unable to make any provision for the future; indeed it was surprising that the requirements of the present were always so promptly met. The Land Transport Train was sadly inefficient; it was in fact a marvel of heterogeneousness and disorganization.

When, therefore, the Commander-in-Chief arrived, he found each day barely sufficing to meet its own wants—no store of provisions laid up in front, and no very bright prospect of supplies being received in quantity from the interior. What then was the use of advancing? He could only have gone to Senafe, where nothing was doing or could be done. It was at Zoula that the strength latent in his very presence was urgently required; for here the military machine had to be organized and set in motion; countless details of importance to be settled once and for all on the spot; and the very fact kept constantly before the Transport Train that the Chief's advance depended solely upon the rapidity with which that department executed a certain work, cannot but have stirred it up to put forth all its strength for the accomplishment of it. The little that was known of the country beyond Senafe, and the utter impossibility of obtaining reliable information except by "spying out the land" mile by mile, rendered it madness to think of leading an army beyond the present advanced post, without having first secured that post against want. Till very recently, supplies had come in but very slowly even at Senafe, although the Abyssinians had had abundant opportunity of becoming acquainted with the English and of gaining confidence in them; how then could it be expected that provisions would be found in plenty at

Addigerat, Antalo, or any of the many places where no great stay was to be made, and where no such acquaintance as at Senafe would be possible? Supplies, every one admitted, *might* be found in abundance; if so, so much the better; the labour of the Transport Train would be lightened, and the advance of the army facilitated; but no one could guarantee, and few expected, anything so favorable.

This difficulty of procuring reliable information regarding the resources of the country, and of inspiring the people with confidence in our honesty and professions, constituted one of the most serious hindrances that stood in the way of an advance. How different it was in this respect even in Affghanistan. The Affghans had traded with us for years; they visited Kurrachee and other places with some degree of regularity; and their horse-dealers were far from being strangers in Bombay. Above all, there was Meer Ali Moorad Khan, who could supply information, camels, or cattle on the shortest notice. In Abyssinia proper the reverse was the case; the people themselves were almost as ignorant of the state of the country as we were. Every man's hand was against his brother, and so firmly established was the reign of terror, that to travel, except in armed bands, was attended with the greatest risk and but seldom attempted. As a matter of course, lying, right and left, was resorted to by travellers as being some slight safeguard at least to the more ingenious and accomplished fabricators; the tales of these men had therefore to be received with extreme caution, if not with actual distrust.

The risks to which travellers worth fleecing were constantly exposed, even in the more settled districts visited by the Pioneer party, are well exemplified by an incident related by Colonel Phayre, of the truth of which there is no room for doubt. When he was at Addigerat,

a kafila man, with a valuable stock of ivory, skins, &c. arrived there on his way to Massowah, where he hoped to find a market for his wares. Entering into conversation with him, Colonel Phayre was made acquainted with the hairbreadth 'scapes the man had had, and of the satisfaction he felt at having at length reached what he considered safe ground, reduced though his caravan was by the black mail which had been repeatedly levied of him by the peoples through whom he had passed. The present was, he said, to be his last journey—and his last journey it was; for he was attacked by a band of marauders at Tekonda, killed, and his caravan looted. This same band was believed to have been hovering round Upper Sooroo for several days; but the result of their reconnaissances not having proved satisfactory, they retired without attempting to enrich themselves at the expense of the depôt there.

To facilitate the transfer of stores to Senafe, new organizations, or rather systems of working, were constantly being introduced into the Transport Train. This unfortunate department seems somehow or other to have been pretty much at the mercy of everyone who happened to have the talent of putting admirable and improved schemes on paper; and there was at one time reason to fear that, unless the talents of these no doubt clever officers were turned into another channel, the efficiency of the Transport Train was doomed; it would soon be "improved" off the face of the earth. To-day there might be reason to believe that the Train was bidding fair to do good work with some degree of steadiness and regularity; to-morrow all was again confusion; no sooner had the men and officers of different divisions become acquainted with their duties under the system instituted, than it was at once abolished and another substituted in its stead. Within three weeks three different systems had thus been in vogue—the "through convoy" system, the "relay" or "tappal"

system, and the "convoy system revised." On Major Warden's arrival, the system of through convoys was found to be working so badly that the "relay" system was established. Divisions were posted at Senafe, Rarayguddy, Upper Sooroo, and Koomaylee, and each division worked only between its own head-quarters and the station beyond, the loads being passed on to the animals of the next division, and so on to Senafe. The advantages of such a system are apparent: inspectors, muleteers, and animals were constantly under the eye of the officers to whose division they belonged, and the same amount of work could be done as under any other while stricter supervision could be maintained.

But for some reason or other, and contrary to the wish of the Director, the old broken-down system was again resorted to—a system theoretically unimpeachable, but one which could hardly but break down, simply on account of the excessive amount of fatigue it imposed upon men and animals, and of the impossibility of carrying out, in practice, sufficiently vigilant oversight of the convoy. The muleteers, all but in a state of mutiny already, would find opportunities of still further neglecting their duty, and instead of batches of mules being discovered lying untended with their pack saddles on, the chances were that they would be found by-and-bye with loads and all. The captain of a division was held responsible for the condition of the animals committed to his charge, and yet he could only see them three times a month! The work which the convoy system represented as being accomplished daily was perhaps all that could be expected. Nearly four hundred camels left Zoula for Koomaylee every morning; these were detained at the latter station owing to the abundance of babool forage there; the five hundred mules to which their load was transferred proceeded right through to Senafe. Between Koomaylee

and Senafe there were now four regular stages, viz., Upper Sooroo, Undal Wells, Rarayguddy, and Senafe, so that, allowing a day for each stage, and a half at each end of line, the trip occupied ten days. The Transport Train was supposed to have 5,000 mules available for Commissariat requirements; these being divided into ten detachments, allowed the necessary five hundred to start from Koomaylee daily, and the first convoy was thus returning to the starting point as the last was leaving it. So a constant round was kept up, and 20,000 rations carried to the front every day. Even at this rate, it was questionable whether six months' provisions could ever have been stored at Senafe, so great were its requirements. It was evident that the depôt must be relieved by sending part of the force on towards Addigerat, to attract country-grown supplies.

The pack-bullocks worked right through from Zoula to Senafe, nearly four hundred starting daily. There were abundant indications of the increasing popularity of the Shoho transit among the people of the country, not the least convincing of which was the large number of young untrained bullocks daily brought in to receive their bag of grain, with which they scampered off in the direction of Koomaylee, at a rate of speed which an experienced bullock, knowing that it had a long and difficult journey before it, would never have dreamt of attempting. These Shohos were now carrying about 10,000 bullock-loads per month.

To counteract and prevent the rogueries of the muleteers, whose looting propensities, laziness, and dissatisfaction with their lot had caused so much inconvenience and loss, half a troop of Sind Horse were despatched as a guard with each convoy; now that the last of the Sindhees had gone, the services of sepoys from the native infantry regiments were called into requisition. Notwithstanding that so much had been laid, and would, as it seemed at this

stage, yet have to be laid, at the door of the Transport Train as a department, it is but right to add that Sir Robert Napier warmly complimented the officers of that department upon the zeal with which they performed their arduous duties—a recognition which the industry and ability of individual officers well deserved.

Renewed efforts were constantly being made to secure more abundant supplies from Abyssinia itself. At Zoula an extensive bazaar had sprung up, rendering the post of Provost Marshal, ably filled hitherto by Lieutenant Holt of the 4th King's Own, anything but a sinecure; and it was hoped that, before long, milk, vegetables, &c., might be procured there, as well as brandy, beer, and preserved meats, which were either not absolutely necessary, or were out of the reach of the majority by reason of the extortionate prices demanded for them. But the main effort was being made at and beyond Senafe, whither General Merewether and Colonel Phayre had gone to devote their attention specially to this question. Latest accounts stated that about 5,000 lbs. of grain and 40,000 lbs. of hay were being brought in there daily for sale—a great improvement upon the rate of supply a fortnight before.

Major Beville had also sent out parties of his Beloochees from Upper Sooroo to search the mountains and ravines in that neighbourhood for grass; and they were successful beyond expectation, having discovered luxuriant meadows capable of supplying their depôt at least; this encouraged further search, which no one doubted would disclose further equally rich pastures. Greatest results were, however, expected from the mission of Captain Moore, His Excellency's Arabic Interpreter, and Meer Akbar Allee, a Mahomedan gentleman from Hydrabad, Deccan, among the Shohos. Nor were these expectations disappointed, for, that the zeal manifested by the people of the Passes was kindled by Captain Moore, is evident from the fact that

wherever he went grass came in at the rate of 3,000 lbs. or more a-day.

Mention has already been made of the arrival of a confidential agent from Kassa, Prince of Tigre, and also of the fact that Kassa had expressed a desire to have an officer accredited to him. As it was very desirable to retain this influential chief's friendship, to turn that friendship to the best account, and to avoid every act of omission or commission which might in any way arouse his wakeful suspicions, or lead him to consider himself slighted, Sir Robert Napier consented to grant his request. The choice of Major Grant, C.B., the fellow-traveller and friend of Speke, was undoubtedly the very best that could have been made; and it was most fortunate that this distinguished officer was available for the delicate duty. Major Grant, with M. Munzinger as his attaché, left for Senafe in company with General Merewether three days ago, thence to proceed on his mission to Adowa, the new capital of Tigre. Major Grant had instructions to arrange, if possible, a meeting between Kassa and Sir R. Napier, in order that the prince might see for himself the sort of army that was passing through his borders. What most surprised an Abyssinian on beholding a British camp, or a regiment on the march, was the discipline and quiet which prevailed; and when a little closer inspection showed that there was not a single woman in the Force, their surprise knew no bounds. In both these respects, according to Abyssinian notions, "the English are not at all like soldiers."

No further news had, up to January 23, been received from the captives; nothing had been heard of the progress of Theodorus, or of the whereabouts of the runaway King of Shoa. Wakshum Gobazye, the Incomprehensible, had however indited a letter to the Commander-in-Chief, which contained expressions of supreme delight at the advance of the English army, assurances of co-operation when the

proper opportunity arrived (of which, however, Wakshum himself was to be judge), and a strong desire that we should "come quickly." This, of course, meant nothing, except that he cordially hated Theodorus, and would do nothing to prevent the extermination of his power. The lord of Lasta felt, perhaps, that he could not do much in the way of aiding; he was therefore a most enthusiastic abettor, and, with a strong presentiment of coming gain, was determined to be "in at the death."

There were at this stage two views of Theodore's policy prevalent in camp, which may be mentioned, allowing each to form his own opinion regarding the probability, at the time, of either—or neither. The one may be termed the doctrine of "free will," and the other that of "necessity." Those who held by the "free will" view maintained that Theodorus was loitering on the road exactly because it suited him to do so. Nor were they without grounds for their belief, for, said they, he is now traversing the richest provinces of Abyssinia, where he can procure corn, and wine, and milk, and honey for his army—all for the taking; whereas, were he in Magdala, he could not maintain his army for a week, and, without his army, what is he?—a hated and helpless tyrant, whose life would not be worth a day's purchase. They held that he was "biding his time," knowing that the captives were virtually in his hands, and that he could have actual possession of them long before Sir Robert Napier could reach him. The other party maintained that he loitered of "necessity," compelled by circumstances over which he had long ceased to have control; that he had been at the top of his speed ever since he left Debra Tabor, and that it was by no means certain when he might reach Magdala.

One of the events of the past week was the opening of the Zoula and Koomaylee railway. Trucks had been running, or rather crawling, along it for some time, pushed

by a crowd of sepoys—a plan which doubtless had its advantages, but which had its disadvantages as well. For one thing, it often involved a lamentable waste of labour. It was no unusual sight to see a score of groaning coolies pushing along a half-laden truck at a snail's pace, when a dozen of them could have laid hold of the bags or baggage, and carried it off at a trot with the greatest ease. But all this was numbered with the past now; for the iron horse was started on Sunday morning and proceeded along the line smoothly and successfully. Some little anxiety was felt about the sufficiency of the rails, or rather of the way in which they were laid down—they were merely 'spiked' to the sleepers and did not rest on 'chairs'; but everything went well—for a time. Great was the interest felt in the engine by all, from the Commander-in-Chief downwards. A group of generals, colonels, and officers of less exalted quality, might be seen in the evening staring at it as it stood on the Bunder, as if they had never seen anything like it in all their lives before. One general, distinguished alike in the arts of war and peace, admitted having stood their looking at it till positively ashamed of himself, when he turned to ask some common-place question about the condenser at work behind him, in order to relieve his embarrassment.

But who shall describe the surprise the Shoho mind experienced, when the ponderous thing which they had seen moved on shore from the lighter with such extreme difficulty, first uttered a series of shrieks and then moved off, impelled by some invisible agency of which their "untutored minds" could form no conception. They followed it in a dense crowd, wonder depicted on each countenance by an enormous display of eyes and teeth; or surrounding some travelled Hindoo sepoy, they interrogated him, through an interpreter, regarding the phenomenon. 'Luximon,' however, who

knew as little of the theory of its working as did his African brother, rather intensified than allayed their curiosity by telling them all he knew of it—that it was *shaitan ka kaum*—the doing of the Evil One. The expressions, "Zoula Railway," "Commissariat Junction," and "Koomaylee Extension," somehow never seemed to fall strange on the ear; but one was, on hearing them, transported elsewhere for the moment, and fancied these places must be situated in the fertile plains of Guzerat or Dharwar, instead of on the desert shores of Africa. Two miles of railway were now being laid per week, so that the Koomaylee Extension was expected soon to be completed. Little did the Engineers know the difficulties with which they yet had to contend. Some of the professional railway workmen and a first instalment of the Army Works Corps had now arrived; and their arrival relieved the men of the various regiments from much of the fatigue duties, in connection with the railway and other works, which they had lately had, and which, to their credit be it said, they engaged in with a will.

The telegraph had now been in operation as far as Koomaylee for a fortnight, and the Lower Sooroo office was opened on January 20th. The line was also being constructed from Senafe downwards, at a rate of speed which would, it was computed, effect a junction between the two parties in ten days' time. Interruptions were somewhat frequent. Stray camels and mules found the poles very convenient as rubbing posts; they played the accompaniment to "God bless the good Duke," and down went the erection. The Shohos too found Hooper's patent telegraph core exceedingly useful to bind their spear-heads withal, and so stole it whenever opportunity offered. It was therefore found necessary to post patrols along the line to prevent interference on the part of either camels or natives in future.

In connection with the foregoing mention of camels, it may be remarked that the beasts of burden which were daily being landed for the Transport Train, were the most wretched specimens of their class one could well conceive; Pharaoh's lean kine must have been fools to them. The mules were so bad as to be actually unable to kick; the camels were worse, some of them could not even crawl. A cargo of camels from Aden was landed one day; nine were unable to leave the bunder; some died of their own accord; others were mercifully killed. Of the 160 which were taken to the Transport lines, sixty-one were pronounced by a Committee of Inspection to be "utterly unfit for service of any kind." These were sent to the other end of the Bay to browse at Arraphale, where there was food and water, if peradventure they might recover sufficiently to fetch a few dollars. Camels were bought in great numbers by a contractor at Aden, who agreed, in consideration of the price being increased to a certain extent, to find transport for them to Zoula. In this he failed, and having large numbers at Aden could procure no suitable food for them, either in point of quantity or quality; and as the animals were being starved, a transport had to be sent for them. A steamer was also despatched to the ports of the Red Sea, with Captain Heysham, an officer of the Commissariat department, who had instructions to buy up as many animals as might be procurable.

Having mentioned the amount of fatigue duty so willingly done by the various regiments in Abyssinia, European and native, it may be interesting to notice also the efforts made by the officers of the 4th King's Own, the only European regiment at Zoula, to provide amusement for the men, and to show them that amid all the hurry and hard work inseparably connected with such a campaign as that on which they were engaged, nothing would be left undone which could reasonably be effected to promote their well-

being and happiness. Cricket, for which they came prepared, had not been practicable yet, and never was; but the camp-fire of the 4th was one of the most pleasant pictures to be seen in camp. After the Band had played "Champagne Charlie" or some other popular airs of the period, officers and men would gather round the fire, and there with a good bowl of punch in the centre—mirth and song flowed unrestrained till the evening gun of the *Octavia* announced the hour for retiring.

Sir Robert Napier was from the first desirous to have carts set to work in the Pass, as being a more expeditious mode of conveying stores than the mule and bullock transit. It being also highly important that the number of animals actually landed for the Transport Train should be accurately known, it was determined to kill two birds with one stone, by deputing two officers to take a census of the beasts of burden at work along the Pass, and to form an independent judgment regarding the state of the road. Lieutenant Hozier, of the Life Guards, who had seen a fair amount of campaigning, and Lieutenant Clark, of the Madras Cavalry, who for smartness and intelligence was an acquisition to the Train, were despatched on the twofold mission; and the result of the separate reports submitted by them was that a cart was immediately sent on from Zoula, to put the question to the proof of an actual experiment. The general expectation was that the pioneer vehicle would not reach Senafe without experiencing such difficulties as must lead to the postponement of the use of wheeled vehicles, if it did not meet with some serious *contretemps*. But the experiment was entirely successful, and two score more shortly followed, as will be seen from another chapter.

The postal service between Abyssinia and England, and Abyssinia and Bombay, was for several months a downright disgrace to every one connected with it. Mails left

Zoula for Jibbel-Teer twice a week, and it was a mere toss up whether they met the P. & O. steamer of which they were in quest or not. If they did meet it, it was a question whether the P. and O. steamer would take the mails; and the result was that a week after the mail steamer left Annesley Bay, she frequently returned with the mail still on board. This occurred as frequently with the mail for England as with that for India. The service was no service at all, and, had it been suggested by some post official, would have been summarily discontinued and the dunder-head wigged as he ought to have been. It was plain that nothing would do except a service with Suez and Aden direct; the expense could not be one whit more, and the security and utility secured thereby would be invaluable. One instance of the working of the Jibbel-Teer system is supplied by the fate of the mail for Bombay which left Zoula on January 15th in the *General Havelock*. The steamer met the P. and O. mail, which passed on without taking any packages on board, as it was too rough to lower a boat! Orders were therefore sent to secure the packages being sent on by the *Thales*, which left for Bombay direct on the morning of the 23rd idem. The whole scheme was a mischievous and silly farce, of which the London Post Office and the Bombay Government, especially the latter, ought to be for ever heartily ashamed. A few weeks later, in consequence of still more gross mismanagement, the direct service with Aden and Suez was insisted upon by Sir Robert Napier.

Though the following is not very closely connected with the expedition, it may yet claim sufficient relation thereto to be tacked on at the end of this chapter. It has already been noticed that the *genus* 'loafer' flourished on African soil as well as Asiatic, and so congenial was Abyssinia expected to prove to the class, that "the authorities" were specially warned against an enterprising member of it.

The following letter dated Alexandria, December 4, was addressed by Mr. Francis, of H. B. M.'s Consular Court of Egypt, to Colonel Stanton, C. B., at Cairo, and by him transmitted to Abyssinia :—

"SIR,—A swindler who calls himself Count Anersperg is supposed to have travelled to Abyssinia with the object of fleecing the officers and others belonging to the expedition, as he has succeeded in robbing banks and private gentlemen here and at Constantinople. His documents are forgeries, and his success in cheating even prudent people very great. There is an order from Vienna for his apprehension, and though it would be very desirable to catch him, and send him hither to the care of his Consulate, yet my chief object is to ask you to take the necessary steps to warn the military authorities engaged in the Abyssinian Expedition, that they may guard the officers and others against the plausible villainies of this accomplished scoundrel."

The Count, however, did not make his appearance in Abyssinia, at least not *in propria personâ*, and, as he evidently travelled eastwards, the probability is that he directed his course to Bombay to make an attempt on the prudent "banks and private gentlemen" of that 'fast' little island.

CHAPTER IV.

UPPER SOOROO, *January 27th.*

As regiment after regiment landed in Abyssinia, the first question asked by officers and men—when are we likely to go to the front?—indicated clearly enough the desire that was uppermost in every breast. That desire, it need hardly be said, was greatly intensified at Zoula by the departure for Senafe of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, and by the feeling that events must soon transpire which would either bring the Expedition to an end, or at least throw some light on a future now shrouded

in impenetrable darkness. All naturally longed to share in the excitement of the operations directly conducing to bring these events to pass, and in whatever glory might attach to them. Very few indeed have minds so constituted and well-ordered as to derive solid consolation from the reflection that "they also serve who only stand and wait;" and those who were "booked for Zoula" in most cases either bemoaned the hardness of their fate, or quietly settled down to the vigorous prosecution of their daily work, and to the enjoyment of those comforts and conveniences which were beyond the reach of their otherwise more fortunate comrades. This last was no doubt the wisest course they could pursue; for while there were many at Zoula and the depôts beyond it whose duties constantly demanded their whole energy as before, there were, no doubt, also some whose chief duty throughout was to watch the progress of events.

However great the disappointment of being left behind may have been to some, both regiments and departmental officers must have felt that no partiality was shown in the movements that had been made. The regiments that were the first to arrive, and to whose lot had fallen the greatest share of the hard work, were the first to move forward; and no regiment was passed by another except the 3rd Light Cavalry, which was obliged, on account of the mortality among its horses, to give place to the Sind Horse. And the same strict impartiality was observed towards staff and departmental officers, as far as the exigencies of the service would allow. Major Mignon, who had done such excellent service at Zoula, as head of the Commissariat, was deputed to take the first division of the force from Senafe to Antalo, and was already *en route* to the former station to make arrangements for an immediate start beyond.

Sir Robert Napier and his personal staff, accompanied

by Colonel Thesiger, Deputy Adjutant General, and Captain Holland, Assistant Quarter Master General, left Zoula, as has been said, on the morning of January 25th, and were now at Upper Sooroo whence they were immediately to proceed to Undal Wells—the depôt between Upper Sooroo and Raraygudy. As His Excellency proceeded up the Pass there was no lack of subjects to occupy his attention; the state of the road, the supply of water and provisions at the various depôts, the actual working of the Transport Train, and the multiplicity of questions connected therewith, were all too important to be passed over without having special and independent consideration devoted to them.

In order, therefore, to gain an accurate personal knowledge of these matters, and to issue such orders as might be considered necessary, Sir Robert spent a night at each station, and could not thus reach Senafe till the afternoon of the 29th. Orders were despatched from Sooroo for the immediate advance of the 4th King's Own and the Mountain Train Battery from Zoula to Senafe; of the 25th and 3rd N. I. to work in the Pass between Koomaylee and Lower Sooroo, so as to render it perfectly passable for carts; the Beloochees and the Bombay Sappers and Miners were to find work beyond Senafe; the 25th Punjab Infantry were to replace the 3rd N. I. at Zoula, and do duty there till the arrival of the 2nd Grenadiers. The Naval Brigade, which had landed before the Chief left Zoula, was to follow on as soon as transport could be provided. The brigade was under the command of Captain Fellowes, of H. M. S. *Dryad*, and consisted of a fine-looking set of men, with bone and muscle for anything that might be required of them; but, dressed up in sun topees and gaiters, they did not in the least resemble sailors.

Though the road from Zoula to Koomaylee, and up the

Pass, had not yet reached that state of completion which characterized it afterwards, it was impossible not to be struck with the extraordinary nature of the difficulties that had been overcome, and the amount of work performed by Sappers, Beloochees, and sepoys. From Zoula to Koomaylee there was at this time nothing but a sandy track through what may be termed a thin forest of stunted baubool trees. It presented no difficulty whatever to the passage of baggage animals, or even of carts; but then no rain had yet fallen to convert the dust, already more than six inches in depth, into a sticky paste, and so softening the loam underneath as to let the wheels sink half way to the axles. When, however, the railway should be open to Koomaylee, the carts would not be required to leave the hard road beyond the terminus. When the sea breeze sprang up, so thick were the clouds of dust driven by it that objects only a few yards in front were barely discernable. The approach of even a convoy of camels could only be discovered by the greater density of the cloud in their vicinity, which might be at one time nearly stationary, and at another would rise in whirling spiral columns to a height of 3,000 feet or more. Near Koomaylee the shingly nature of the soil prevented the dust from being so abundant, and rendered travel more easy and pleasant; but, along the greater part of the road, to march with a regiment or convoy must have been attended with inconvenience beyond description.

Koomaylee itself is pleasantly situated in a fork of the mountain, upon the sides of which, at some distance up, were pitched the camps of the various regiments and detachments stationed there. On an eminence were the camps of the General commanding, and of the G-14 R.A.; and in the valley at the mouth of the Pass farther up were the lines and animals of the Transport Train, and the wells upon which the water supply entirely depended, and which promised to meet all demands that

may be made upon them. It may here be stated that under the care of Lieutenant LeMessurier, R.E., to whom were confided Norton's, Bastier's, and the other pumps, the water supply at Koomaylee was most abundant, and the watering arrangements all that could be desired.

For some two miles and half beyond Koomaylee the road was good, and such as would present no obstacle to the progress of the seventy carts which had arrived from Zoula, *en route* for Senafe. Beyond this distance, however, and right on to Lower Sooroo, the track was so rugged, so thickly studded with boulders of all sizes, that the passage of wheeled vehicles would be all but impossible till a few days' clearing should have been vigorously prosecuted. There was not, and never had been, anything to prevent the free passage of baggage animals, so that these six miles had been left pretty much as they were found, through the eagerness of the Sappers to operate upon the "Devil's staircase," and other places affording some scope for their engineering skill. And such places were certainly not wanting between Lower and Upper Sooroo; the whole of the Pass bore marks of perseverance and work which none could fully realize who had not seen what it was two months before, or who had not made the experiment of traversing one of the many passes near it. The road was now exceedingly good, the gradient was for the most part easy, and the water gurgling and rushing among the huge rocks by the road-side not only supplied animals with abundant opportunity of quenching their thirst, but was unspeakably refreshing to the ear of many a tired and dust-laden traveller, more especially to those who might be able to recall the pleasure they experienced in days gone by from "paidling" in just such another "highland burn." The surrounding scenery effectually prevented any such delusion as that the bubbling brook was "the infant rills of highland Dee,"

in every case where such was likely to be indulged. On either side was the barren rock instead of the waving fir; so narrow was the gorge, and so steep and perpendicular the cliffs, that it was a matter of extreme difficulty to catch a glimpse of the streak of sky overhead, without first removing one's helmet, that its brim might not interfere with his upward gaze. So many, too, were the bends and turns in the Pass that the prospect in front never exceeded a hundred yards, except when, now and again, the rays of the setting sun threw out in strong light some peak higher and more distant than that immediately ahead. Sooroo itself is literally situated "in a cleft of the rock," which resembles nothing so much as a huge quarry, in which a thousand Titans might have been hard at work for years; round the sides were picketed horses and mules; and a few yards higher up might be seen the tents of the Beloochees. During the day the heat was intense—120 degrees at least—and in the evening the smoke from the various fires, which was confined by the surrounding cliffs, rendered the atmosphere almost stifling, and gave the place the appearance of a certain vast subterranean prison, which need not be more closely defined.

Intelligence was received at Sooroo of the melancholy death of Colonel Dunn, V. C., of H. M.'s 33rd Regiment, at Senafe. The following extract from a private letter dated Senafe, January 27th, relates the circumstances under which this excellent soldier met a sad and untimely end, and shows how he was esteemed and beloved by all who had the pleasure of knowing him :—

"Colonel Dunn had gone out with Sinclair, our Doctor, "to shoot deer. He separated, and Sinclair returned to "camp without meeting Dunn. The first thing that was "heard of him was from his gun-carrier, who came running "in to say that the colonel was dead. A number of

"officers immediately went off to the place, and there, on "the bare hill side, they found one of the bravest and "best soldiers of the army lying dead, with a bullet "through his breast and shoulder. The man who was "with him was the only one who saw him die. He says "that, after walking a long way, the colonel stopped, "rested on his rifle, and asked for water; that on his "bringing the water to him, he turned and stretched out "his hand for it; something was thus brought against the "trigger, leading to the accidental discharge of the rifle. "This is the saddest thing that could have befallen the "regiment, for Colonel Dunn was beloved by all."

Major Cooper took command of the regiment in Abyssinia.

UNDAL WELLS, *January 28th.*

The comparative quiet of Undal Wells, the delicious coolness of its evenings and the coldness of its mornings, rendered it one of the most favourite stations in the Pass —the more so, as the features noted above formed such a pleasing contrast to the heat, dust, and din of Sooroo. Situated as Undal was in the Pass, it could boast no superabundance of space, beyond what was required for the accommodation of the men and animals stationed there, or constantly passing through; but one was not, as at Sooroo, "cribbed, cabined, and confined" to such an extent that when he moved his hand (or rather his elbow) was against every man, and every man's elbow against him. In many respects, however, the two stations are very similar: there are the same overhanging schist rocks, boulders of gneiss, veins of quartz, and almost the same absence of vegetation. Indeed from Koomaylee to some distance beyond Guinea Fowl Plain, where the nature of the country and vegetation entirely changes, the sameness of the road—an unlimited amount of dust and rock, and a very narrow rib-

bon of sky overhead—rendered the ride thus far one of the most dreary it is possible to conceive. Every mile that one travelled suggested to him precisely the same reflections—the inconceivable magnitude of the hidden fires and the violence of the subterranean convulsions to which those mountains owed their original conformation, and the terrific violence of the torrents which had carved and hewed their bases till in many places they were as smooth and perpendicular as a wall of masonry.

Another feature of the Pass, and one which was perhaps more surprising than any of the foregoing, was its exceedingly gradual ascent, so gradual that only now and again did the traveller actually realize that he was ascending at all. Between Sooroo and Undal Wells there had been no great difficulties in the way of road-making; the work had for the most part consisted in throwing aside stones, and a little levelling. The consequence of this was, that with the exception of a few miles not yet operated upon, the finest equipage in Bombay might have been driven along at speed, without risk of injury to either the vehicle, its occupants, or its horses.

The wells at Undal were continuing to fulfil all the expectations that had been formed regarding them. Though the flow of water was not very great, it was constant; and from forty to sixty gallons a minute might be pumped from one of them without sensibly affecting it. At this date 1,300 animals were watered there twice a day, and an indefinite quantity provided for the use of the depôt and for troops *en route*. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief was out all the morning, inspecting the animals and loads of the convoys, the commissariat stores, the hospitals (happily all but unoccupied), and the lines of the Transport Train. The working of this last department was very narrowly watched by His Excellency as he proceeded, and observations made since his departure from Zoula had

led to the issue of several orders, having for their object the prevention of that delay which formal references on emergent matters from officers at outstations to the Directors at Zoula inevitably entailed. The Train was doing, and had done, a great amount of good work, and most of its officers were zealous and possessed of great resources of intelligence and ingenuity; yet it was very much feared that the department would never be thoroughly efficient, for reasons which will be shown in another chapter, when the organization of the Train comes to be considered.

To provide transport for the different regiments, and at the same time to meet the demands of the various depôts, was a work attended with such difficulty as to be often almost impossible. On the other hand, the Pioneers from the Punjaub, who came provided with their own transport, could move on the shortest notice, without having to wait for a single cart or baggage animal. The enormous expense of the cumbrous system adopted, under which nothing could be done with despatch, and organisation in the lower ranks was utterly impossible, can never be computed. The loss in mules alone represented no insignificant sum; for of over ten thousand landed at Zoula not more than half could be mustered at the end of January (many could not even be accounted for); and as the average cost of a mule ere it reached Zoula was Rs. 500, more than two and a half lakhs had thus been absolutely squandered. Such a system of transport will certainly never be adopted again.

News from the captives at Magdala up to December 31 met Sir Robert Napier at Sooroo. All were well, and rejoicing in the expectation of being rescued by their own countrymen before Theodorus could reach them. If their information could be depended upon, and it had generally proved to be from trustworthy sources, the news of a British Force being actually in Abyssinia, and coming against Theodorus and no one else, had produced a most

desirable effect upon the minds of the rebels. Whether they had adopted the sensible and only safe plan of forming a coalition against the Emperor, or whether they continued to oppose him individually, was not stated ; but at any rate they seemed to be putting forth renewed and not unsuccessful efforts to arrest his progress. The hope which had been indulged by many, but regarded as chimerical by others, that nothing further than a march to Magdala would be required to fulfill the objects of the Expedition, thus seemed likely to be realized ; in which case the evacuation of the country before June could easily be accomplished. Everything was, at any rate, progressing satisfactorily in that direction. The captives naturally counselled all despatch in the advance of the Force ; but it was difficult to see how the movements could be made with greater rapidity than was being done.

CHAPTER V.

SENAFE, *February 2nd.*

Undal Wells is beyond question the most pleasant depôt in the Pass, well watered, well sheltered, and possessing an agreeable climate. Beyond Undal signs of vegetation appear ; amid the jungle bushes an occasional tree may be seen, the candalabra tree (*Euphorbia candalabriensis*) being most conspicuous, as well on account of its size as from the peculiar development of its branches, which must have suggested its name.

Rarayguddy, the next depôt, was found to be too much of a straggling place to impress one favourably at first sight, though, blessed as it was with good water and plenty of shikar, it would doubtless have improved on acquaintance. It was observed that both Rarayguddy and

Undal might, with a very little work, be made to defy the torrent in whose bed they were situated, and operations were accordingly put in progress to render them thus impregnable. Commissariat and Transport Train depôts, and the few tents it was considered necessary to have there during the rains, supposing these should overtake us before we could overtake Theodorus, and again betake ourselves to the sea, were moved from the sandy or alluvial foundations upon which they at first stood, and located on rocks round which the waters would flow smoothly, or against which they had raged in vain for centuries.

The Pass beyond Rarayguddy was intensely beautiful, especially when beheld in the early morning. The shrubs and trees—many of them in flower—were fragrant and fresh from the effects of the dew which had not yet disappeared before the burning sun, whose rays were already illumining the mountain tops, and exhibiting the foliage and flowers of the trees there in brightest colours—greens, and reds, and orange, and yellow.

After leaving the Pass and commencing the ascent of the Senafe ghaut, the traveller, for the first time since leaving Koomaylee, could turn round and enjoy a long look behind him; and a magnificent view it was—thoroughly Himalayan, as indeed also had been the Pass all up from Rarayguddy. At no great distance were the mountains which looked such a long way off from the sea, and so inhospitable and bare; below was a jungle so luxuriant and thick, with here and there a cluster of ambitious pines, that under the circumstances the name of "forest," though an exaggeration, was a very allowable one; above was the zig-zag road, winding upwards so as to overcome in great measure the acclivity of the hill; and beyond were the huge boulders of trap, at the base of which could easily be pictured the white tents of the English camp.

Arrived at the top of the ghaut, the plateau immediately opened out, intersected by a broad and level road—so good and so easy, that none but the most inveterately lazy steed could restrain the impulse to indulge in a smart gallop along it. In ten minutes' time the camp was in view, the tents of the Head Quarters and Staff situated on the summit of an elevation, with the lines of the European and Native regiments and Artillery grouped round the base. The plain of Senafe is large and admirably suited for an encampment; it has plenty of water without being in the slightest degree damp or marshy, and the hills and crags on either side afford good stations for pickets. Extensive patches of cultivated land were at this season to be seen around, but more especially along the road towards Addigerat; and the luxuriant crop of thistles which waved wherever the ground had been tickled, proclaimed the sharpness of the soil. About five miles along this road is a plain yclept Wild-goose plain, where the horses and mules of the Artillery (G-14th, and Khandeish Mountain Train) were picketed; this meadow was as verdant and loamy as any in the Midland Counties of England. There was in the plain what—barring the absence of water—looked exactly like a skilfully laid-out artificial lake, and from several wells in its bed water was obtained in sufficient quantity to meet all the wants of the animals and men stationed there.

A mile beyond Wild-goose plain there is a bare hill, upon which a fair is held every Thursday. This fair, when visited by several officers of the Force, was attended by from three to four hundred people. They all bore the appearance of poverty, as also did the wares exhibited for sale—small quantities of grain of different kinds, skins, pottery, and one or two bullocks, whose condition had not satisfied the critical and experienced eye of Major Thacker, the Commissariat officer at Senafe. The explanation of this poverty-struck appear-

ance was not far to seek; the whetted sword and well-worn spear which nearly every Abyssinian present carried, explained the whole. The Abyssinians have no great eye for business with a foreigner till they see dollars; once they know that he has "reals" about him they readily display their treasures, but nothing can be had for less than a dollar; any worn-out or antiquated article of attire is more valuable in their eyes than many dollars.

Villages are situated on several of the eminences of the plateau, and exhibit only two styles of architecture—the bee-hive and the barn style. Senafe itself, now that it has had greatness thrust upon it, may be described; and *ex uno disce omnes*. It consists of some twelve or fourteen bee-hive shaped buildings, about three times the size of the model, and of about as many diminutive barns, the latter having stone in their composition; the whole are huddled together at the base of a huge sandstone boulder, so as to be hardly distinguishable therefrom. It may be remarked that immediately on the arrival of the force at Senafe, "the villages of the plain" began to extend their boundaries, and new hives sprang up in the night like mushrooms. The natives volunteered their services as hewers of wood and drawers of water "on spec," and day and night the cries of *nuckharie nuckharie, fani fani*, familiar to Indian ears in spite of their disguise—sibboleth—resounded through the camp, grateful only to lazy cooks or ghorawallahs, who would rather sacrifice an anna or two than fetch water or wood for themselves.

There can be no doubt that the prospects of the Expedition looked infinitely brighter at Senafe than they did at Zoula. The atmosphere down below was murky and foggy —physically and intellectually; nobody could tell you exactly what was being done, what had been done, or what it was intended to do; the atmosphere of the highlands was bright and unclouded, one could see at a glance what had actually been accomplished, what required to be

done next, and, most difficult and important point of all, one was there able to see how it might and could be done. The Commissariat was tolerably well off for supplies, as is evidenced by the following facts:—a month's provisions had been sent on for the force beyond Senafe, and next week a like supply for even a larger force was to be forwarded to Antalo. Bullocks and sheep were abundant, and though grain was now scarce in the *immediate* neighbourhood, Major Dickinson of the Sind Horse had lately purchased in one day at Focada 11,000 lbs. of barley, his own wants being only 2,400 lbs. daily! Grass continued plentiful. Carts were now at work in the Pass, and seventy had arrived and gone again without accident of any kind, so that provisions would now be brought in very much more speedily than had been possible before.

Then as for the Transport Train—that too promised to be perfectly efficient beyond Senafe. From Senafe onwards it was to be entirely separate from the division below, it was to be under a different Director—people said Major Tyrwhitt from Sind—who was generally looked upon as "the right man" at last; Captain Griffith's division had always been in a better state of organization than any of those lower down; the Lahore and Punjab Mule Trains were there perfectly efficient, and the requirements in the way of carriage for regiments and individuals would be kept at the minimum. Major Tyrwhitt not having accepted the post, Captain Hand, of H. M.'s 82nd Regiment, was selected to fill it. It was computed that 3,000 mules would be amply sufficient to carry the tents, baggage, and provisions of the Magdala Force, and that number would readily be available when required; short delays which could not be foreseen might be found unavoidable as the Force advanced, indeed this was to be expected; but delay for an indefinite period did not stare the Chief in the face as it had done a month ago at Zoula. All matters connected

with the Train were henceforth ordered to be referred to the Quarter Master General's department for disposal and direction; this necessarily devolved a great deal of work upon the department, but Captain Holland, who was in charge of the office—Colonel Phayre having always been absent surveying—was the man to dispose of it quickly and effectually if any man could.

If ever a Blue-Book is published containing the reports sent in by the heads of the various departments, regarding the working of their departments, by no means the least interesting will be that of Colonel Holland. In virtue of his office as Controller of Transport and Supply, Colonel Holland was head of the Commissariat and Transport Train. In the first report he submitted to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, this officer dwelt with extreme pleasure on the efficiency and zeal of the Commissariat department. Now this, under any circumstances, would not have been surprising, seeing that Colonel Holland was an officer of that department; but the Commissariat officers did splendid service throughout the campaign, and deserved, as they received, due praise from quarters more likely to be unbiassed than Colonel Holland was. But the chief interest of the report centred in the sections devoted to the Transport Train. Upon that unfortunate department were poured forth the full vials of the Controller's indignation; "he stood aghast on beholding such a rabble" (or words to that effect), and similarly strong invectives were hurled about right and left, the Director being proclaimed utterly unfit for the post he held.

Now all this was very frank, to say the least of it, seeing that Colonel Holland was considered by many not to be altogether unaccountable for the disgraceful state of affairs against which he waxed so powerful in declamation. But His Excellency had been too long in

Zoula not to know just as well as Colonel Holland, and probably a great deal better, what was the state of the Transport Train; and the reply which Colonel Holland's rounded sentences called forth must have convinced him of this fact. His Excellency agreed with Colonel Holland that the Train was in a sad state of inefficiency, to which all the delay that had taken place was solely to be attributed; but he did not think that Major Warden was so much to blame for that as Colonel Holland represented. Major Warden's hands had been terribly fettered in Bombay, and he could not fairly be held accountable for very much that took place at Zoula before his arrival there. Other officers were mentioned upon whose shoulders must rest a large share of the blame, and it was suggested that Colonel Holland himself might exercise a little more energy and zeal as head of the department, making the Director more of a second.

These were precisely the sentiments of nine-tenths of the Force—that officers drawing enormous salaries should do something more than praise on the one side and find fault and decry indiscriminately on the other. Moreover, were seconds-in-command always selected and high appointments filled up, regard being paid to special fitness for the special post and not to relationship to those in power—say a Secretary to Government in the Military or any other department—the Train would not have been in the deplorable state in which Major Warden found it, and from which he was not the man quickly to rescue it. Let it be distinctly understood that the author has not expressed the foregoing opinions solely as his own; they are held by almost every one whose opinion is worth quoting, from the Commander-in-Chief downwards.

It was mentioned in last chapter that despatches had been received from the Magdala captives, dated December 31, and from Mr. Flad, who was with the king, dated the 24th

idem. No particulars had then transpired, however, further than that Theodorus was hemmed in by his enemies and making scarcely any progress on his march. Though the hopes founded on this news were all dispelled by subsequent intelligence, it will be well—in fact it is necessary —to state what was the exact position of affairs on the 31st of December, in order to preserve the sequence and relation of events. Though a messenger from Theodore's camp could reach Magdala in two days, so determined was the opposition offered to the king's advance by the peasants of Dalanta and Dawoont that his progress was almost *nil*. So disgusted, too, were the officers and men in the royal army, with the life they were compelled to lead, that desertions were constantly taking place, and the appearance of a powerful rebel would have left Theodorus with only a few choice spirits like himself around him. Wakshum Gobazye of Lasta promised the rebels his protection, and was preparing to dispute with Theodorus the passage of the Djedda. Theodorus realized his hopeless position if the rebels held out, and sent embassies to them, offering unconditional pardon if they would only return to their allegiance, and vowing to be a better king to them in future. But, said the rebels, who were only too well acquainted with their monarch's amiable peculiarities, "better be slain in battle than burned alive"; and sent back the messengers to bid his majesty do his worst. On new year's day Wakshum wrote to Sir Robert Napier wishing the Expedition all speed, and assuring him of his readiness to assist in annihilating "our common enemy."

In three days' time all was changed; Wakshum's innate cowardice proved too much for him; he had precipitately retired to Lasta, leaving the people of Dalanta, Dawoont, and Yedjou to prove by sad experience on what a treacherous broken reed they had been leaning;

and the star of Theodorus was once more in the ascendant. The peasants had now no alternative but to submit, put their shoulders to the wheel of Theodore's mortar, and assist in carrying his baggage. The road to Magdala was clear and open, and on the 4th of January his Majesty was at Bet Hor, as Mr. Flad says, within ten hours' ride on a good mule from his destination. His entry into Magdala had not yet been reported by Mr. Rassam or any of the captives; but rumours were daily prevalent in camp that he had actually reached that place. His Majesty's letters and messages to the captives were invariably couched in the most affectionate terms; he made no reference whatever either to the rebellion of his own subjects or to the Expedition, of which it was impossible he could be ignorant; his precious mortar was alone represented as the cause of his delay; but for all the anxiety and toil this piece of ordnance had caused him, he would, he said, be amply repaid when he heard Mr. Rassam praise its elegant proportions and its incredible power. Nor had he hinted what he meant to do with the captives; he merely assured them that he and they would "all be happy yet." This reticence on Theodore's part regarding the very subjects which must of all others chiefly have occupied his mind was regarded as indicative of some pre-arranged policy which it was impossible then to understand, but which all believed would not much longer be concealed.

If the sudden retreat of Wakshum Gobazye could be attributed solely to cowardice—fear to meet with 30,000 one who could bring only 10,000 against him!—it was felt the part he had played could not be productive of any more unpleasant consequences than exposing the captives to greater risk than they were in before; for Theodorus was now a lost man, come what might. But there was some reason to fear that Wakshum's defection might have a deeper signification. As is well-known, Kassa,

prince of Tigre, last year wrested from Wakshum several of the provinces now attached to the kingdom of Tigre, and the two chieftains were therefore at mortal enmity with each other. They had been given clearly to understand that the English would have nothing to do with their internal disputes, that they met every one as a friend who acted a friendly part, and would leave every one precisely in the position in which they found him.

Notwithstanding this, Wakshum had been exerting himself to prevent the recognition of Kassa as the ruler of Tigre; and his letter to Sir R. Napier, dated the 1st of January, already referred to, concluded somewhat as follows—"Kassa "will no doubt tell you that Tigre belongs to him by right of "inheritance; that is a lie; do not believe him." Now it was thought that he might have heard that Kassa had been in correspondence with the Force, that Major Grant had been despatched as envoy to his capital, and that he himself had been invited to meet Sir Robert Napier at Addigerat, and at once jumped to the conclusion that all the promises made by the English were mere empty words. So radically treacherous are the Abyssinians themselves that this view of the matter was not altogether unreasonable; though the cowardly part played by Wakshum throughout strongly favours the belief that an inordinate amount of discretion alone prompted his flight.

Major Grant and M. Munzinger reached Adowa on January 31st, and were received with all honour. Next morning, before breakfast, a grand durbar, at which some two thousand chiefs and people were present, was convened for their formal reception. The enthusiasm of the inhabitants, both men and women, is reported to have known no bounds, 'for,' said they, 'Tigre is safe now that the English are our friends.' No business, beyond eating and drinking, was transacted at this durbar; Kassa kept putting off all arrangements regarding his meeting with

the Commander-in-Chief till the morrow. On the morrow Major Grant and M. Munzinger attended divine service in the church of Adowa, as many enquiries, which they desired to set at rest, had been made regarding their religious belief—were they Christians, or were they children of Islam? Thereafter, four interviews were granted by Kassa. The first interview was a private one, at which Sir Robert Napier's letter was read. To this letter, Kassa made a long verbal reply, to the effect that his ancestors had for ages been on terms of friendship with the English, and that he wished to perpetuate that friendship. He had, moreover, intended to despatch an embassy to England had the war not brought the English to him. Next day they met Kassa in public, to see the poor of the land eat and drink in the presence of their Chief. On the 3rd another private interview was held, and a final one on the morning of the 4th previous to Major Grant's departure, at which Kassa gave them a horse as a present for the Commander-in-Chief.

The object of these interviews was to arrange, if possible, a meeting between Sir Robert and the Chief of Tigre. His Excellency hoped Kassa might be induced to come to Addigerat, thinking that a full realization of the power of the English would best be imparted to him by seeing the Force then assembled there. But, desirous as Kassa was to meet Sir Robert, the custom of his country forbade his departure from his capital for a month after the ceremony of "big drums" *(baala nugareet)* which had just been celebrated. This ceremony, which consists of the beating of forty drums at the same time, amounts to a proclamation of independent sovereignty—a step which Kassa had never taken till now. He expressed his willingness, however, to limit his stay at Adowa to fourteen days, in the hope that he might meet Sir Robert at Addigerat, or in Haramat, before he got beyond his reach. It was

ultimately arranged that they should meet in Haramat. The mission was assured that nothing would be left undone by Kassa to procure supplies of grain and grass for the Force in Tigre, and this promise was faithfully kept till the end.

Colonel Phayre had now been engaged on survey work beyond Addigerat for about a fortnight, and was making rapid progress with the laying out of roads, the preparation of which promised not to be by any means difficult. Water and grass were abundant; and the country was found to be generally level. There was yet time enough to ascertain what the country was like beyond Antalo, but all were prepared to encounter greater difficulties between Antalo and Magdala than they might experience between Antalo and Senafe. Dr. Krapf, who must be regarded as having been the best authority in camp at the time, was not of opinion that any great delay would be caused by the nature of the country; at the same time steep and trying places would, he said, be met. By way of Lasta the route was declared altogether impracticable; the king's road must be followed by way of Lake Ashangi, whence the road to Magdala was, he thought, level enough. According to the same authority more grain would be found in Lasta and the Ashangi country than in Tigre, unless Wakshum should offer opposition. It was much regretted that Dr. Krapf's health would not permit of his going on with the Force, for he was found to be as genial, intelligent, and venerable an old gentleman as one could wish to meet.

General Merewether had already gone on to Addigerat, whither the Commander-in-Chief and the Head Quarters were to proceed in a few days.

GOONA-GOONA, *February 4th.*

The road from Senafe to Goona-Goona—about ten miles—was found easy enough, and had required comparatively little labour to be expended on it. Unlike the road below Senafe, it lay between cultivated fields, or more correctly speaking, between patches of land tilled according to the manner of the Abyssinians. "Thorns and thistles shalt thou bring forth"; and the men of Tigre do not attempt to frustrate the fulfilment of the divine decree any further than is absolutely necessary; for they allow most of the thorns and thistles to remain wherever they present themselves, sowing their grain between. A patch of barley, five or six acres in extent, might occasionally be seen as thriving and free from weeds as could be expected, considering the nature of the soil; but this was the exception, not the rule. The road intersected the Shumasana plain, and lay for the most part nearly parallel with the Roba Menna.

Though the distance between Senafe and Goona-Goona was but short, crops might, in the beginning of February, be seen in all the different stages of advancement. Near Senafe one could tell that the fields were cultivated, but whether they were fallow, or whether the crops had just been sown, there was nothing in their appearance to decide. Farther on, barley might be observed springing in one field, while in the next the drooping of the ear and its rustle when shaken by the wind proclaimed it ready for harvest. In the immediate vicinity of Goona-Goona harvest was now going on, the crop being immediately threshed so as to lose neither the shining hour nor the shining dollars. Several extensive plains of grass were crossed, on which large herds of sheep and cattle fed contentedly, or, relieved of their loads of Commissariat flour and rice, rested an hour before continuing their journey to Addigerat. For each bag the Abyssinians carried from Senafe to Addigerat, they received a dollar and

a half; and so tempting was this reward, that many who were unable to procure an ox or an ass, carried the burden all the way on their own backs.

Already the effects of intercourse with enlightened nations were beginning to manifest themselves among the Abyssinians; few in the employ of the Commissariat passed an European without tendering a salaam, and one old fellow from whom I asked a drink of water refused my request until I first answered his question whether I was a Christian. On being assured that I was, he placed his *mussuk* at my service. Had I professed myself a follower of the Prophet, the only sect besides the Christians with which the Abyssinians are acquainted, I might have died of thirst for aught the greyheaded herdsman would have cared.

The district crossed to-day was very bare; no trees were to be seen, except now and again a group of the gigantic candalabra trees, which looked very gaudy in blossom, their flowers being of all shades between a deep crimson and faint pink, according as they happened to be fresh or near decadence. The aloe, too, with its flower of sickly yellowish hue, was to be met with in all directions; and many others, of which it would have taken some time to ascertain the class, genus, and species, let alone the name. It may be remarked, however, that these new-fangled forms do not constitute the whole flora of Tigre; there was to be found there many a "wee, modest, crimson-tippit flower" and unambitious creeper that would pass unnoticed but for its fragrance, which bore so strong a resemblance to the favourites which scent the roadsides and hedgerows of old England, that one regarded them as old familiar friends.

"The primrose pale and violet flower
"Found in each cliff a narrow bower."

Sir Robert Napier arrived at Goona-Goona on the evening of February 4th; he left Senafe about two o'clock in the afternoon, but as several chiefs met him by invitation on

the road, he was detained for some time in conversation with them, although the question of his Christianity was left untouched till his return. Intimation had been sent to Methin Kifflie, chief of Matara, Aytoo Maloo, chief of Mackaish, Kuntibah Gitteyeh, chief of Cheffa, Aytoo Goshoo, chief of Achfussye, and Sheik Oomar, chief of Senafe, that His Excellency would be glad to see them at the village of Chickwaro, five miles from Senafe; and as their chiefships had received some slight inkling of a present of thirty dollars each being in store for them, their attendance was punctuality itself. These men possess but little power in Tigre, their influence is entirely local; Aytoo Goshoo of Achfussye is the only one who wears any decoration, and that decoration is—a shirt. Some two or three years ago the Naib of Arkeeko, who is a very good Arab in his way, and has been zealous in aiding the Expedition, made war upon the Shohos. He bore no particular ill-will to the Shohos, only he had got a cannon and wished to show somebody what execution it could do, and the Shohos being his nearest neighbours had the preference. The Shohos, with the aid of Aytoo, worsted the Naib and captured his cannon; and Aytoo, in order to remove such a dangerous plaything to as great a distance from its former possessor as possible, gave it to Kassa, of Tigre. For this he was promoted to the dignity of *baalakames*, or "possessor of a shirt."

About four miles from Senafe I met a chief—doubtless one of those named above, but which it is vain to guess—proceeding at a rapid pace in the direction of the camp. He was of course *en grande toilette*, his head had been doubly anointed with butter and oil—the housings of his hack were fringed with bells, and on the mule behind him sat a servant who held over him an umbrella. In front were about a dozen musketeers, marching 'anyhow', their muskets so antiquated and clumsy that "Brown Bess" is

a recent invention in comparison; a group of spearmen brought up the rear. Tried upon such soldiers as these, the Snider, like the Chassepot, could not but "work wonders."

The station of Goona-Goona was most picturesquely situated in a valley which officers who know the Himalayas said strongly reminded them of the valleys of the Upper Himalayan ranges, the flat-roofed huts of the village making the resemblance more complete. The view from the summit of the sandstone hills surrounding the station, though limited, was remarkably fine. Crops at all stages of advancement—for they sow three times a year, in February, June, and October—clothed the valley; the hills were clad with mosses and ferns of every description, the delicate maidenhair being very abundant. At no great distance was a veritable cascade, with rocks and water complete.

The chief object of interest was the chapel and tomb of Father Libanus, a reputed holy man who is said to have performed many miracles, one of which was causing water to spring from the rock on which the shrine is built by a stroke of his so-called apostolic staff; and there, to be sure, both water and staff remain "unto this day, to witness if I lie." The ascent to the chapel, which is hid away on a lofty shelf of the rock, was such as should only be undertaken by those who are blessed with steady heads and limbs; the slightest giddiness or slip of hand or foot at some parts of the rock would certainly result in fractured limbs, if not in more serious injury. There was in the chapel, however, much to repay the visit, especially if the visitor happened to be anything of an antiquary or wise in the lore of the ancient Ethiopians. There were the Gospels, with abundant illuminations and illustrations, the Psalms of David, the lives of saints whose names and deeds are unrecorded elsewhere, and many other books of the contents of which the worthy priest himself had but the faintest conception. An elegant silver

Maltese cross and some of the illuminations were photographed; and arrangements made for copying the Gospel of St. Matthew, as, being in the oldest Ethiopic, the text might serve to test the accuracy of certain disputed passages in the sayings of our Saviour. An ark, a censer, and a few tattered vestments constituted the furniture; on the walls were representations of events recorded in Holy Writ or in the lives of the saints, the most prominent and intelligible of which was the Lord's Supper, the eleven sitting at table with their Master in the midst, and Judas Iscariot on the extreme left tumbling headlong into hell. The chapel had doubtless been built in its almost inaccessible position in order that it might be safe from the impious hands of the Gallas and other infidel invaders—a precaution by no means unnecessary, if the priest got his head battered as it is in the service of the sanctuary.

This strange ecclesiastical eyrie will now have another attraction for visitors who may be so adventurous as to climb its rocky stair, for as a return for the confidence manifested in us by the church people, and for their kindness in lending their properties to be photographed or copied, Sir Robert Napier presented the church with an embroidered silk vestment. This was prized by the priests more than any amount of money would have been. The vestment bore the inscription in Amharic—

PRESENTED
TO THE CHURCH OF ABUNA LIBANOS, GOONA-GOONA,
BY HIS EXCELLENCY SIR ROBERT NAPIER,
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, ABYSSINIAN FIELD FORCE,
5th February 1868.

How this somewhat singular gift, so attractive to its recipients, had been prepared I am not able to say; but the incident may fairly be taken as showing that forethought for the little but important links in any long chain of operations which has always been characteristic of great commanders.

CHAPTER VI.

ADDIGERAT, *February 7th.*

Sir Robert Napier and Staff arrived at Addigerat on the afternoon of February 6, escorted by the Head Quarters of the Sind Horse. As the distance from Senafe is only about forty miles, (some put it down as thirty-seven, but they are long ones), the journey might have been accomplished in two marches, but the nature of the road forbade any approach to hard riding, even if there had been any necessity for it, which at that time there was not, so it was generally divided into three stages. The road may best be described as having been a fair bridle track, hardly so good as one would have expected a "King's road" to be, but presenting no serious obstacles to horses or mules even when laden with baggage or stores.

Immediately after quitting the lovely little valley of Goona-Goona, which must have been intended by nature as one of the homes of peace and concord, and its hills to re-echo other sounds than those of the trumpet and the neigh of the war horse, one or two rather steep ascents had to be made, and these, with a still steeper descent a few miles from Addigerat, are the only exceptions that need be noted in terming the road generally level. Whatever room there may be to remark upon the sudden and total disappearance of the grassy plain at Zoula, as described by General Merewether and Colonel Phayre, these officers certainly cannot be accused of exaggeration in stating that there was abundance of grass in the country through which the Head Quarters of the expedition had been passing for the last three days. About a mile beyond Goona-Goona a plain is entered; and this plain was one vast prairie of waving grass, yet the natives who hourly brought in loads for sale evidently knew of even richer pastures, for the plain

scarcely bore the mark of a reaping-hook. The sheltered valleys among the hills, where for aught that is known to the contrary, springs may have existed, were doubtless more thickly clad than the open plateau, unwatered except by the dews and rains, which last had of late been a very precarious and irregular source of supply.

The view which presents itself to the traveller when this plateau is reached is exceedingly fine. The plateau itself is rendered picturesque by the number of trees, or rather large shrubs, dotted across its whole extent, and by the presence of an isolated peak or two which break the sameness that might otherwise tire the eye, while the prospect is bounded, at perhaps a distance of twenty miles, by the range of the lofty Adowa hills, the summits of which are serrated like a row of gigantic sharks' teeth. Near Focada, a turn of the road brings one unexpectedly upon a magnificent valley, and from the path which winds round the verge of the cliff, a view is obtained surpassing any that can be had from the famous 'Points' of Matheran.

The camp at Focada was situated on an open plain, the soil of which was of a soft, black, peaty nature, full of holes, and likely to be converted by a few heavy showers into a perfect bog. There were, however, gravelly hillocks enough to afford accommodation for the limited depôt it would be necessary to maintain there, and the hills in the immediate neighbourhood would have placed everything beyond the reach of danger from anything short of a second flood. Water was far from being plentiful, but there was no lack of cattle and grain; in fact the depôt was maintained at its present size chiefly as a grain mart.

Addigerat is but a miserable collection of hovels, scarcely deserving the name of village, situated at the eastern extremity of an undulating plain, the low-lying parts of which are under cultivation, and the more elevated portion—about five-sixths of the whole—rocky and almost barren.

The camp of the Infantry and Artillery was pitched on one of these gravelly eminences ; that of the Cavalry and the lines of the Transport Train were in the valley a few hundred yards farther on, so as to be in close proximity to grass and water. Addigerat is, notwithstanding its apparent insignificance, the chief town of the province of Agame, and was for many years one of the favourite residences of Sabagadis, the ruins of whose castle are the most extensive of the many ruins which are to be met with in every village. But these ruins are not all that remain of Sabagadis ; for on his death his son Sabhat succeeded him, and built a stronger and larger residence, which is now in a good state of preservation. It consists of a square tower, with four smaller erections on the top (doubtless intended to answer the same purpose in case of siege that a parapet and loop holes would do), and is surrounded by a wall strong enough to resist any engine of war formerly in the hands of the Abyssinians.

Sabhat was not, however, allowed to enjoy for any length of time the security and comfort of the house that he had built ; for Wakshum Gobazye who was his superior till Kassa claimed dominion over the province, visited his vassal in the beginning of 1867 (last year) ; and, pretending to be doubtful of his fidelity, carried him off to Lasta, leaving his wife to look after the castle in his absence. Report said that the chief had been set at liberty, and that the high-born and disconsolate lady who occupied the castle tower alone was likely soon to have her husband restored to her ; but the revolt of Kassa, likewise one of the Sabagadis family, rendered this extremely improbable, and it mattered little to any one except themselves whether the report was true or false.

There is also at Addigerat a church which is by no means an inconsiderable building, and might almost be designated a temple, for it possesses a porch, a court, an

inner and outer wall, a holy of holies, &c., according to the Jewish fashion of old. Many of the Abyssinian customs and ceremonies are of Jewish origin, besides the style of church-building, as, for instance, the practice, religiously observed, of turning every animal's head towards Jerusalem before slaughtering it for food; only animals so killed are regarded clean and fit to be eaten. This church is a more recent structure than those of Goona-Goona or Focada, and is much more elaborately decorated, the perspective and design of many of the representations on the walls proving that the Debra Tabor artist to whom the work was entrusted was no mere amateur, but must have made a study of his trade. The subjects of his different groups are all Scriptural, taken from the Old and New Testaments, or, where these were exhausted, from Abyssinian mythology.

Yet, notwithstanding the ability with which the artist has sometimes handled his paint brush, there is grave reason to fear that he has not always been strictly truthful in his delineations. One would suppose that the disastrous attempt of Pharaoh to cross the Red Sea in pursuit of the children of Israel would have afforded scope enough for the genius of any painter, without the introduction of fictitious incidents: what with chariots and horsemen, the closing sea, Pharaoh's chariot wheels, chariots driven heavily, the Egyptians dead on the sea shore, and the Israelites safe and jubilant on the other side, surely there was no need to add to the difficulties of the one, nor to the triumph of the other. But Abyssinian warfare is different from Egyptian; so in order to bring the utter hopelessness of the infidels' position home to the minds of those for whose edification he was illustrating Scripture, the Debra Tabor artist has laken but little notice of the chariot wheels, but has introduced instead muskets of Abyssinian pattern, which the doomed Egyptians are

represented as holding high over their heads, stocks uppermost, in the vain hope of keeping their powder dry. It matters not, so far as the moral of the story goes, that powder and percussion caps were unknown to the Pharaohs, but their being introduced and allowed to remain where they are when a touch of whitewash would effectually remove them, does not raise one's estimation of the learning of either the painter who put them there or of the priests who interpret them daily.

The saints, at the resurrection, will, the Bible says, be clothed in robes of white; the Abyssinian saints look forward to something very much more gaudy, viz., long dressing gowns of red and yellow! One or two of the most valuable of these paintings were successfully photographed, as well as passages from ancient manuscripts belonging to the church. Of these last it possessed but few, its collection having been destroyed when the former church was burned by an invader. The priests are all Abyssinians, mostly uneducated and superstitious, but, like the generality of the clergy, they have a keen eye for tithes and offerings.

The climate of Addigerat was found to be on the whole very pleasant and healthy. During the former part of the day the thermometer varied from 80 deg. to 90 deg. Fahrenheit, and by night stood about 40 deg. The days were thus far more pleasant than at Senafe, and the cold by night was less intense. The present (February) was the season when the showers, (not the rains,) were expected; and we had experienced the delights of some of these showers already. They generally fell after sunset, accompanied with thunder and lightning and a strong eddying wind, which sometimes threatened to pluck the bell tents from their seats, or to level them upon their unfortunate occupants. No great discomfort had been occasioned as yet by these showers; and even single-fly bell tents, if pro-

perly pitched, promised to afford adequate protection from heavier rains than we had yet experienced but these tents would be unendurable in India, as the sun would beat through them with unmodified severity, but in a temperate climate they might be made tolerably comfortable dwellings.

February 12th.

The arrival of the Head-quarters and two Companies of the 4th King's Own and of two Companies of the Beloochees, on the 10th instant, necessitated the despatch of troops from Addigerat, in order to relieve the depôt. Accordingly, on the morning of the 11th, the Head-quarter Wing of H. M.'s 33rd, the A-21st Royal Artillery (Mountain Train), and the whole of the Sind Horse in the station, marched on Antalo, under General Collings, taking with them a month's supplies. On the 13th the remainder of the 4th King's Own and the Head-quarters and remaining six Companies of the Beloochees were to march from Senafe for Addigerat, bringing with them as many supplies as could be spared. The Punjab Pioneers (Detachment) now at Zoula were also under orders for the front.

The troops now beyond Addigerat were the following:—3rd Sind Horse, 75 sabres of the 3rd Light Cavalry, Head-quarter Wing of H. M.'s 33rd Regiment, two Companies of the 10th N. I., one Company Bengal Pioneers, one Company Bombay Sappers, and Colonel Penn's Battery of Mountain Artillery,—all provisioned for a month. There were in camp at Addigerat the 4th King's Own, the Head-quarters and two Companies 10th N. I., a Detachment of the Beloochees, and 180 sabres of the 3rd Light Cavalry. Major Murray's Battery, G-14th, had arrived at Senafe, the ascent of the Pass having been accomplished without accident of any kind.

The Transport Train above the ghaut continued to bring on speedily and regularly all the stores which the Senafe depôt could spare ; and want of animals alone caused some anxiety as to the transport of large bodies of troops. Mules were being bought up in Agame as fast as the people brought them in, say at the rate of sixty a week, but unfortunately according to a peculiar style of free trade whereby the seller could fleece the buyer to his heart's content. The country bullocks and donkeys assisted considerably, carrying on an average about a thousand bags per week. The ranks of the muleteers were being weeded of the most glaring scoundrels and incapables, and their places supplied by Hindoostanees, who had at least sufficient acquaintance with quadrupeds to know that mules could not drink if only their hind legs were in the water—a fact of the truth of which I have often seen muleteers' practice at watering proclaim their ignorance.

The officers of the Transport Train ought to have known a truth which sacred and secular history alike teach—that they lean on a broken reed who look to Egypt for help; but they preferred to prove the truth of the maxim that "they risk sore who learn by experience," and they thoroughly proved it. Two batches of Egyptian muleteers had lately been sent down from Addigerat to Zoula in charge of an escort of Sind Horse, whence they would be shipped to their own country by the very earliest opportunity.

And, now that these useless adjuncts had been got rid of, a word must in fairness be said for the good men that there must have been even among the Egyptians. They laboured under the greatest disadvantages; the Indian sepoy and muleteer knew them not, and took no notice of the solitary stranger who found himself in the same convoy with them ; their wants and grievances were known only to themselves, and when they attempted to explain them, an irascible

inspector cut short the explanation with a cuff and a curse for "the blackguard Egyptian." This is no fancy sketch; it relates facts, which were, indeed, made the subject of a General Order by the Commander-in-Chief.

The latest news regarding the prisoners at Magdala and in the King's camp at Bet Hor, was published in the following official *precis* of letters received by General Merewether on the 9th instant:—

"Information has been received of the prisoners at "Magdala up to 17th January, and of those in the king's "camp up to 9th January. All the prisoners were "well. A detachment of troops left Magdala on 8th "January; joined the King in his camp; and were to "return to Magdala with about four hundred prisoners. "The imprisoned Europeans were among the number. "Their leg-fetters had been removed and handcuffs sub-"stituted, so that they might march. It is understood "Mrs. Rosenthal would accompany them.

"There is nothing in the information received from "which we are enabled to judge either how far the King "apprehends the present posture of affairs, or what course "he intends to follow. The King was using every en-"deavour to get the road towards Magdala made, working "with his own hands, and making the free Europeans "help. He had made some slight progress, and had "arrived at the bottom of the valley of the Djedda river. "It is calculated he would reach Magdala about the end of "February with his camp, though by abandoning the "latter he could any day arrive there. The people of "Dalanta continue submissive to him, but those of Daoont "had again refused to submit to him. His soldiers were "suffering from scarcity of provisions and transport.

"It was reported in Magdala that Menelik, King of "Shoa, had again set out for Magdala, better prepared to "act against Theodorus than on his former visit.

"A detailed communication from one of the captives, "sent to friends in England, and there published, has, by "some means, reached the King's camp, and is in the "hands of M. Bardel. Apprehensions are entertained that "he may use it to the injury of the prisoners."

So Theodorus was still careful to give no sign which might in any way assist in arriving at the policy he intended to pursue; and there was nothing for it but to work and wait a little longer. The king's very first move after reaching Magdala would, all fully believed, afford the clue to a solution of his plans; or, if he remained in that fortress inactive, which was looked upon as in the highest degree improbable, the foe at his gates would soon bring the question to an issue. There was, of course, room for difference of opinion as to whether or not Theodorus "apprehended the present posture of affairs;" but it was evident that the mere getting actual possession of Mr. Rassam, Consul Cameron, and the others at Magdala was not his chief aim, else he could have sent and had them brought to him with six or eight hundred men who left that fort to help him on his way. He meant to reach Magdala—baggage, guns, and all—in spite of the difficulty of transport, and the mere fact of his persisting in the attempt, notwithstanding the time and labour required, showed that he apprehended the position of our affairs as well as of his own, and knew that he could arrive there before Sir Robert Napier.

The question which there was no means of answering at present was—What would he do when he did arrive there? It was believed that Padre Del Monte and M. Bardel had altered their line of policy from self-interested motives, as they saw that while Abyssinia was in its present troubled state, while the English were agitating on all sides for the release of their subjects and countrymen, neither proselytizing nor any other object on which they might set their

hearts could be carried on smoothly or successfully in the country. These men were, therefore, supposed to be really anxious to have the prisoners out of the country altogether, and English interference entirely to cease, after which they would have the king's ear all to themselves, and be allowed to carry out their designs without molestation. But "can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?" or can a man who is an intriguer and mischief-maker to the very bone forego the pleasure his base heart experiences by turning such an opportunity as the present to the best account? What matters it to him that those who will suffer most by his intrigues are defenceless prisoners against whom he owes not a grudge so long as he can gain the passing smile of a tyrant, who, bad as he might be, could hardly be so despicable as the creature would seek, by who lying, prying, and wilful misrepresentation, to feed and minister to groundless suspicion and hate. But little faith was, therefore, placed in M. Bardel's conversion.

One of the most useful men in the force was Captain Speedy, of the Intelligence Department, whose knowledge of the Amharic and other languages, and his extensive Abyssinian experience were invaluable every hour. When some chief arrived with his Bombastes Furioso-looking army around him, Speedy, dressed in full Abyssinian costume, and carrying a long straight sword originally made for pig-sticking, put himself in temporary command of the rabble, conducted them to the place appointed for them, took measures generally to secure their good behaviour, and was master of the ceremonies while they remained.

The Intelligence Department embraced an extraordinarily wide field, as was evidenced by the endless variety of subjects to which those connected with it turned their attention in the course of the day. Everything seemed to have

some close connection with that department—from the reception of a chief to the buying of a telegraph post or a pound of potatoes.

Captain Speedy, whose name is well known in connection with Theodore's imprisonment of the Europeans, first visited Abyssinia in 1861, on a shooting tour, travelling to Adowa by the Taranta Pass and Halai. Having asked permission of the Dejaz Madj, Haramatee Saloo, to shoot in the vicinity of Addy Aboo, the scene of the exploits of Mansfield Parkyns, permission was refused, and he was ordered to go to Theodorus, who was especially glad to see Englishmen. Besides this, a report had got abroad that Captain Speedy was the brother of John Bell, Theodore's principal aide-de-camp, which made his majesty the more desirous of seeing him. Starting through Bellessa and Eberat he reached Debra Tabor, and was very favourably received by the King, who expressed great surprise at his almost gigantic stature, and gave him the name of Felica (speedy) and the rank of Basha. After some months' stay at Gaffat, Capt. Speedy, with three other Europeans, was proceeding to see some friends at Gondar, when they were surrounded by soldiers, who had orders to take them back to Gaffat; and, as the *Pall Mall Gazette* says, "but for the fierce attitude of Speedy the whole party had been made prisoners." He would fight but he would not be taken; and on the departure of the soldiers, he returned to Gaffat, and demanded his discharge from His Majesty's service. To this Theodorus at last reluctantly consented, and making him the present of his favourite horse, gave him his discharge in April, 1862, when he immediately started for Massowah, arriving there in May. At the end of the same year he returned, and was employed by Captain Cameron as vice-consul for two years, when he was compelled, by private affairs, to leave for New Zealand, whence he was summoned by Sir Robert Napier in November last.

An old-established fair, of much greater dimensions than that near Senafe, is held at Addigerat every Monday. It would be extremely useful as a means of attracting traders from a distance, if such a class existed in the country. But unfortunately there are none, as the appearance of these gatherings testified. Notwithstanding that there must have been considerably over a thousand people present, many of whom had come from long distances, there was nothing exhibited for sale possessed of any value, and even the coarsest and cheapest wares could only be purchased in small quantities. One man brought his skin of wheat, another made his wife bring his; here could be purchased a jar of honey, sadly in want of clarification, there a pot of butter with part of which the happy possessor had anointed his or her head more freely than usual, in consequence, probably, of its being market-day; and in similarly small quantities could be seen tobacco, red-chillies, beads, skins, and a sort of coarse rug which found a ready market as additional covers for horses and followers. Salt was there in fair abundance, thirty pieces, in shape and size resembling a whetstone, being procurable for a dollar; good bullocks might be bought for about seven dollars a piece, but the meekest-looking donkey must fetch twenty or remain unsold.

Of the natives themselves it is difficult to say anything new, but the opinion formed of them at the Senafe fair was completely altered on Monday last. *Ex pede Herculem*, is a proverb which does not hold good on every occasion; and though the collection of natives we saw a fortnight ago was quiet and orderly in the extreme, it seems it was a mistake to conclude that Abyssinian gatherings generally are so. A greater row than prevails weekly under the walls of the old palace of Sabagadis I hope never to see or hear again.

The people, many of whom may never before have seen an European, evinced the greatest curiosity regard-

ing the manners and customs of the few who visited the market. At first somewhat timid and shy, they were set perfectly at ease by the slightest token of familiarity on the part of the stranger, and anything approaching what they considered a practical joke was not only borne good naturedly but enjoyed immensely. On being satisfied that the "Sooltans" were perfectly harmless individuals, addicted neither to looting nor cannibalism, they would surround some European, examine minutely and in detail his boots, his trowsers, his coat, his hat, which they would have liked to try on, and might perhaps have been allowed to do so but for the superfluous amount of ghee on their heads, and any other article of attire or ornament which happened to attract attention. One left the market with a sort of esteem and liking for the Abyssinians, so far as their character had been exhibited there, for they seemed to be as peaceful and contented as they could well be expected to be, living as they do in a country so unsettled and hitherto misgoverned, and offering absolutely no inducement to pursue an honest and industrious course of life. How long this state of things may continue, no one can pretend to say. Kassa may, if left alone, secure peace and prosperity to Tigre ; he has evidently the good of his people at heart, and seems to feel that internal quiet is the first thing that will protect him from foreign aggression.

Colonel Phayre was now busily engaged with survey work in advance of the force, and must have been about fifty miles beyond this place. From reports submitted by him, a tolerably accurate idea could be formed of the nature and resources of the country towards Antalo, even before we had seen it. The experiences of the past enabled one to picture to himself in truthful colours what a "gently undulating valley," "a rugged rocky ascent," "a steep ravine," "a difficult descent," or a "stiff tract of country" would actually be like. These terms conveyed one idea

to those who could sit at home at ease and read "all about it" over their early cup of tea, and quite a different one to those who had to perform the ascents and descents in the heat of the day.

But although the terms quoted above did occur now and again in Colonel Phayre's itinerary, there was no reason to expect very much more trying ground than had already been crossed between Senafe and Addigerat.

The first station beyond Addigerat was Mai Wuhiz, situated in the district of Haramat. It was said by Colonel Phayre to have a fair supply of barley, sheep, and cattle; grass was *procurable*, and water was plentiful. About the water there was no difference of opinion; but as regarded some of the other commodities, Commissariat officers took a very much less sanguine view than did the Quartermaster-General. The country around Mai Wuhiz was found to be open, barren, and undulating, with green crops of barley and wheat only in the lines of drainage. Water on the road, too, was good and abundant. Five miles beyond Addigerat are the springs of Mai Afdoor, and a couple of miles beyond these, grass and water could be obtained in the Bet Hairat valley. The road as far as Mai Afdoor led up a gently undulating valley, beyond which was an ascent of a quarter of a mile trying for laden animals. Four miles from Mai Wuhiz is the Gorgoona ravine, which also presented some serious work for mules. The station was computed to be thirteen miles from Addigerat.

Fifteen miles from Mai Wuhiz was the next station, Ad Abaga, round which the country is very stiff, with successive steep rises and falls. Forage and water on the road were reported to be as plentiful as could be expected, seeing that the district was lately the theatre of war. Dungalo was the next camp, and was situated nine miles beyond Ad Abaga. In order to reach Dungalo some stiff country, and narrow, rocky, and difficult descents had to be

encountered. Provisions there seemed from report to be limited to goats and cattle. A mile on this side of the station, the traveller crosses the Gumfit river, which supplies good water in abundance, and has an excellent encamping ground on its right bank.

Few people now-a-days place faith in the predictions of dreamers of dreams; but it may interest some to know that the race is not yet extinct in Abyssinia. The following is the translation of a verbal narration of an old man who called himself "Wulda Abiya, of Gwalla, the Holy," and who had a reputation for extraordinary sanctity throughout Tigre:—

"I, Wulda Abiya, of Gwalla, the Holy, dreamed a "dream. The British army on the march will encounter "Theodore's army in three divisions. The former will "turn into fire; the latter into snow, which will dissolve "before the fire. Theodore's army is cut down like grass; "Theodore is hanged; all the captives are released; "Gobazye dies in battle. Christ appears and announces "to the British that Kassa, being a son of Sabagadis, "and a good man, is to be supported; and intimates that "the British shall rule for forty-four years from the sea to "the extreme boundaries of Ethiopia."

The probabilities in favour of the dream proving true would not bear dissection; but the happy way in which he disposes of all rivals except one, and then makes the Deity bespeak support for the survivor, might well be the *denouement* of a good novel.

The return of Major Grant and Mons. Munzinger from Adowa, whither, as has been explained, they had been sent on a mission to Kassa of Tigre, supplied the camp for a few days with novel and interesting subjects of conversation. It was also the means of providing the Force with no little amusement, of an instructive as well as an interesting kind, for the gallant Major came not alone, but escorted by a

picked band of Kassa's soldiers, under the command of one of his esquires, and accompanied besides by the chief of the priests of Tigre. The variety of costumes, of arms, the number of scarred and battered faces and skulls, the general confusion that prevailed in the ranks—if ranks there were,—and, above all, the extraordinary music produced from three long horns and an instrument of the tom-tom order, surrounded the brave army with such a degree of interest as almost prevented its progress through the camp to the place marked off for its encampment.

The General and his men seemed to be gratified rather than discomposed at the merriment and laughter their tag-rag appearance provoked, and allowed themselves to be looked at and handled with every manifestation of pleasure. The chief rejoiced in the name of Lecka Manckwass Eelma, and in having Sabagadis for his grandfather on the maternal side; but he was by no means a leading man in Tigre, though he was sprung from an old family, and was one of those always in attendance on the Prince. The priest of Adowa who accompanied him, bringing a letter from Kassa, was a more intelligent man than the soldier, had travelled to Jerusalem and other foreign cities, had been a steadfast adherent of Kassa's throughout, and was in a fair way to be made a prelate as soon as Kassa found time and opportunity to create one. He was dressed in becoming plain white robes and a white turban; but the warrior was most elaborately got up. Over the shirt of honour which he wore, and which was of many colours, red and yellow predominating, was wound a white cloak with a broad red border; and over the whole a sort of hood. This last consisted of a collar or ruff of otter skin, from which depended six tails of the same material as far as the middle of the back. Mounted on a tat, which must have been infinitely better than it looked, else it had never come all the way from Adowa, and whose trappings were

as original as its rider's, this man was a fair representation of an Abyssinian grandee.

After they had been settled in their quarters by General Merewether and Captain Speedy, a durbar was held in the evening, at which they were admitted to an interview with Sir Robert Napier. To give effect to the spectacle a couple of companies of the 33rd Regiment and 10th N. I., and two squadrons of the Sind Horse and 3rd Light Cavalry were in attendance as a guard; and in order to produce as pleasing an effect as possible on the Abyssinian ear, the bands of both regiments played "discordant symphonies" at intervals.

The interview between His Excellency and the strangers was necessarily a short one, but it was full of interest. Side by side on the floor of the tent squatted the warrior and the priest of Tigre, while Sir Robert sat near them, and inculcated into their minds, through his interpreter, such truths as were appropriate to the occasion, and within their comprehension—that the English had come to this country desirous of remaining on terms of friendship with the chiefs and clergy, and with every one except those who held their countrymen in captivity; that they were delighted to be assured of Kassa's good-will; that Sir Robert would wait for him either here or elsewhere as long as he could do so conveniently, and that should it be found impracticable to have a meeting now, one might be arranged on his (Sir Robert's) return from Magdala. The Abyssinian, casting a furtive yet meaning glance around the tent, which was fully occupied by His Excellency's Staff, and towards the entrance, in front of which stood the thin red line of the 33rd and 10th, flanked by the 3rd Light Cavalry and the Sind Horse, replied that the Abyssinians were very glad indeed to receive the English as friends, and would all render aid against Theodorus, whose cruelties had made him to be hated by the whole country.

Next morning a parade of the troops stationed at Addi-

gerat was held, in order to give the Abyssinians an idea of the style of warfare practised by the British, and to supply them with a topic of conversation when they returned to Adowa. There appeared on parade 185 of the Sind Horse, 180 of the 3rd Light Cavalry, the Head-quarter Wing of the 33rd Regiment, the Head-quarters and two Companies of the 10th N. I., and Colonel Penn's Mountain Gun Battery. The 33rd were put through the bayonet and platoon exercises—the latter to show the rapidity of fire of the Snider rifle; the 3rd Light Cavalry went through the sword exercise, first with their horses standing and afterwards at a brisk gallop past; then the whole line of Cavalry charged past at a gallop, the Sind Horse all but riding over the Abyssinians, who failed to convey their tats out of the way with sufficient speed; and the whole was concluded by two quick rounds of blank shot from the steel guns. Many exclamations of surprise were uttered by the strangers, especially on witnessing the performances of the Cavalry, as they were never before aware that the English knew anything about horses. "No one," they said, "could "stand for a moment against such charges; but then no one "would be so mad as to try." The range and accuracy of the Snider or of the mountain guns were not exhibited to them for two reasons—first, because ammunition was all too valuable to be expended for any such purpose, and, in the next place, because it was desirable that the range should not be known, lest, should some skirmishing between this and Magdala be found necessary, the enemy should never venture within range at all.

It was authoritatively stated by some one before the force reached Addigerat, that there was grain in *Tigre*. The truth of this statement could hardly be called in question; but it must have conveyed to the minds of those unacquainted with the state of the country a very erroneous impression regarding the supplies that might be expected.

The past fortnight had proved most conclusively that there was not a single holder of grain in any part of the country through which the force had yet passed, and that it would be a precarious and difficult undertaking to provide for the support of an army one-fourth the size of the present. The wheat and barley bought by the Commissariat were brought in, husks and all, in small quantities of from fifteen to twenty pounds, for which they received a dollar. Much of this was of inferior quality, and had the appearance of having either been frost-bitten, or cut while almost green, in order that the peasants might take advantage of the tempting market. There were fortunately plenty of bullocks and sheep for slaughter, which were almost the only commodity that could be had for anything like a reasonable price, the average being about seven dollars. One bullock lately purchased for nine dollars yielded 300 lbs. of meat! But as a rule everything was most extravagantly dear, and had become so in a fortnight's time. Fowls, fearfully and wonderfully made, for they were as tough as shoe leather, cost a dollar each, whereas formerly eight or ten could be purchased for the same sum; for a couple of small pumpkins nothing less than a dollar would be accepted; eggs, fresh, were two for a dollar—rotten, eleven; and everything else in proportion. The fact is the Force had no help but allow itself to be swindled to an enormous extent, and by savages to whom sixpence would have possessed the same value as a sovereign. The dollars they received in such numbers were never used as money by the people themselves; they nailed them on their shields and sword hilts as trophies and ornaments.

It is impossible to account for the inauguration of such a waste of public money, except by attributing its origin to an inordinate dread of offering a man a few dollars less than he asked, lest he should have removed his goods or his animals. But the Abyssinians were

not such fools as some people seemed to think them; they knew the value of their wheat or their mules just as well as we did, and better apparently, and would chuckle as merrily over their five-and-twenty dollars as they did over their five-and-forty or fifty. There was also reason to fear that there had been some want of co-operation and mismanagement, especially in the purchase of mules, but in other transactions as well, though to a less degree. The unsophisticated Abyssinian who wished to dispose of his mules, getting for them a fair or perhaps large price, naturally took them to the lines of the Transport Train where he saw hundreds of others, and sold them readily to Captain Griffiths for thirty-five rupees; but the "knowing ones," who had learned "a wrinkle or two" during the past fifteen days, took their drove to the other end of the camp altogether, and disposed of them for fifty dollars a piece! Telegraph posts had been being brought in in large quantities, and were no doubt valuable and cheap at half a dollar a piece; but that was no reason why twenty per cent more should be paid for them by one department than was being paid by another. In addition to the articles mentioned above, ghee, honey, butter, and potatoes could occasionally be procured in small quantities.

As this is a most important subject, it may be interesting at the risk of being considered tedious by some readers, to give a few figures, showing the actual quantities purchased by the Commissariat during the past few days by perhaps the most energetic and smartest officer in the department. On the 3rd instant (the great market day—being Monday) 7,500 lbs. of barley were purchased, 219 lbs. of ghee, a few sheep at two dollars each, 33 cows and bullocks; on the 4th, 2,790 lbs. of barley and 64 lbs. of ghee; on the 5th, 679 lbs. of barley, 816 lbs. of wheat, and 39 lbs. of ghee; on the 6th, 612 lbs. of barley, 697 lbs. of wheat, 76 lbs. of ghee, 87 lbs. of potatoes for 6 dollars; on the 7th, 287

lbs. of barley, and 204 lbs. of wheat. Now these quantities hardly represent one-fourth of the daily requirements; and the falling off in spite of dollars paid on the spot was very ominous. Grass of course was very plentiful; whereas on the 3rd, only 4,000 lbs. of grass were purchased, about 15,000 could now be had daily.

CHAPTER VII.

ADDIGERAT, *February 16th.*

So unfavourable, for a long time, were the reports sent from the force in Abyssinia; so quickly did "running streams" run themselves dry, and verdant meads disappear with the passing shower that gave them birth, that people at a distance seemed long to be unprepared for other than gloomy accounts of the progress and prospects of the campaign. Consequently, when a correspondent who had been watching for months for some faint glimmer of a brighter prospect ahead, was able to announce what he fondly hoped would send overburdened and desponding tax-payers into ecstacies of delight, his cheering announcement was generally treated as a mere illusory dream—the fleeting and evanescent vision of one who saw only through rose-coloured spectacles. The plains of grass he had discovered were supposed by the reader to have vanished before the next day's sun; and the streams of which he had heard, and which he had reason to believe were "sure," were regarded as "sure" to have disappeared before he could "well say he had drank of their waters." Nor was this to be wondered at or regretted. It was not to be wondered at, for people know that travellers and explorers generally are apt to magnify their own discoveries, and complacently to believe that no such lake or river has for a long time been added to the map of the world as that whose boun-

daries and extent they have surveyed, or the course of which they have traced; and it was not to be regretted, for fleeting and transient hopes are far more likely to be productive of evil than a little incredulity, which, within bounds, it would be hard to distinguish from that most excellent of qualities—caution. Additional pleasure was also derived by the correspondent from being able to repeat to the incredulous that if his brook was not likely to "flow on for ever," he had never yet wanted wherewith to slake his thirst, and that his oceans of grass, though none of the finest, afforded the reaper plenty wherewith to fill his arms.

Similarly with respect to the prospects of the expedition generally: the brightening horizon beheld from Senafe continued not only unclouded, but the streak actually expanded and enlarged as the Force advanced. A gloomy-minded individual might have conjured up as black a picture as had yet been painted; but no one who could look honestly and fairly at what had been done, what remained to be done, and the means in hand for the accomplishment of it, could have denied that everything was progressing rapidly and satisfactorily. What had been the causes of the delay and embarrassment that had hitherto been found unavoidable? First of all there was the sad inefficiency of the Land Transport Corps; following upon this, and caused by it, there was an insufficiency of provisions for a large force at Senafe, or at any station beyond Zoula; there were the difficulties of the Pass, and want of water at the landing-place, together with the hundred-and-one petty but by no means inoperative worries and unavoidable vexations following in their train. The difficulties of the Pass had been effectually overcome, as the excellent working of the hundred and twenty odd carts testified; the water difficulty at Zoula succumbed, first before the exertions of Captain Edye and his men, latterly before the good fortune

of Chamberlain's Punjab Pioneers, and had nowhere re-appeared; the only questions therefore to be considered now were those of transport for the Force, the supply and transport of provisions, and what little road-making might be necessary as the Force advanced; or, in other words, the state of the Transport and Commissariat Departments, and of the country beyond Addigerat.

The great improvement which every day manifested in the working of the Transport Train was mainly attributable to three things—the excellent service done by the carts between Zoula and Senafe, the arrival of the Lahore and Rawul Pindee mule trains, and the extensive weeding which the ranks of the muleteers had undergone—the utterly useless and unimproveable being replaced by Sikhs, Pathans, and Mussulmans of the Punjab, than whom better men for the work could not have been desired. The value of the carts may best be illustrated by comparing the work done, before they could be employed, with that accomplished, now that they were doing their three trips a month with ease. During the month of January, when, as will be remembered, the movement of troops was entirely suspended until a certain quantity of provisions should be laid in at Senafe, and every available animal was employed for this one object, so slow was the progress made, that it was for some time doubtful whether any actual progress was being made at all. Apprehensions were beginning to be entertained as to whether men and mules together were not consuming more during the trip than they started with from Zoula; and the ability of the Transport Train ever to lay in a few months' supplies at Senafe was openly questioned, the Train finding few backers. Now, however, affairs were very different; for, during the past fortnight, at least four months' provisions for the troops at Senafe and beyond it must have been conveyed into that station. In proof of this it is only necessary to enumerate the

quantities received at Addigerat and forwarded towards Antalo, premising that the balance of supplies at Senafe had not been allowed to decrease. With the Force which left for Antalo under General Collings, a full month's rations were sent, as well as with the Sind Horse which followed to join it; there were now in Addigerat a month's provisions ready for the Force under orders to leave on the 17th of February, a month's rations for a thousand men were expected daily, and a like quantity in the course of a week. These supplies are calculated without reference to anything likely to be obtained in the country, except bullocks and sheep. There could, thus, be no room to doubt but that a new and better state of things prevailed northward of Senafe, and to the carts, which His Excellency Sir Seymour Fitzgerald, Governor of Bombay, declared would be of no use whatever, the improvement was mainly due. Between Senafe and Addigerat the native bullock transit rendered most valuable assistance. As many as 700 bags of flour and rice had been brought in by this agency in one day; and 540—representing eighteen days' provisions for 1,000 men—sent on towards Antalo the next.

But the mainstay of the Transport Department here was the splendid Lahore mule train, which was in every way efficient; Captain Griffiths' division of the Bombay train, which had always been the best, and which was now rid of Egyptians *et hoc genus inutile;* and the Rawul Pindee mule train, now on its way up. Such was the superiority of these divisions over any of the others, that it was decided always to retain them in the front, being tried, and beyond the risk of failure, except from extraordinary causes. It was quite refreshing after what one had been accustomed to see in the mule lines, to visit those of the Lahore train. Instead of finding half a dozen mules roaming loose, seek-

ing—poor starved brutes—something to devour; or half a dozen more at the opposite extreme, twisted and interwoven in a sort of Gordian knot which a few stupid Egyptians were attempting to unloose by pulling lustily the first rope's end they could lay hands on, everything was orderly in the extreme; the mules had headstools, heel-ropes, and coverings exactly as if they had been valuable horses; they were watered and fed with as great regularity as circumstances rendered practicable, and the drivers manifestly took an interest in their work. While others were being flogged because they positively neglected to feed their animals when the grain was brought within a dozen yards of them, the Sikhs and Pathans from the Punjab might have been seen six or seven miles out in search of grass—not that grass could not be had nearer, but they thought it could not be had good enough, and were in quest of better. Now see the result of this; and what I am to mention forms a telling contrast to the untold mortality which raged among the other mules, starvation being one of its predisposing and most fatal causes. Of the 1,620 mules in the Lahore train *only six had died till now;* and of the 1,000 mules in the Rawul Pindee train, *only three!* Officers from the Punjab stated that they could have got thousands of equally good drivers, and hundreds of mules from Jhelum and the frontier; the question is why they were not brought to Abyssinia; and surely "somebody should be hanged" for the culpable blindness or neglect which overlooked such a valuable source of supply, upon which it was found necessary to make large drafts after all.

What has been said above is sufficient to show that the Commissariat was at least in very easy circumstances; and more need hardly be added. The news from the front, whither Major Shewell had gone to pave the way for the Force, was not such as to raise the expectation of great things

from the country. At one place grain, cattle, grass and ghee were reported to be abundant; and the next, a few miles farther on, was characterised as a "poor place, to which everything must be brought on." The natives did not seem to be so largely imbued with the *auri sacra fames* which had been so lavishly pampered among the Shohos and people of Agame, so that the dollar was a less "almighty" key wherewith to open their affections and grain bags. The chief men of one or two villages had promised to do what they could, and had a "retainer" given to them; but the people, they said, were an independent and intractable lot, unlike those of the upper country, except that they were equally addicted to lying and stealing. The unsettled state of various villages and districts ahead was sufficient to account for much of this, as the minds of the population were more likely to receive and retain unfavourable impressions, and to harbour all sorts of unfounded suspicions, than if we had found each man at peace under his own juniper tree. Several large armed bands of Agami had lately passed Addigerat in a southerly direction, the superiority of their arms and the unusual compactness of the line—which was dressed every few minutes by officers whose badge of office was a cat-o'-nine tails—testifying that they were on martial deeds intent. Notwithstanding the watchfulness of these officers, one or two succeeded in paying a short visit to the camp—just to ascertain whether the English were Christians, and whether, in that case, they could spare them a few grains of powder or a drop of arrack. There was, however, every reason to believe that such supplies as the country afforded would be forthcoming by and bye. The Sind Horse had on several occasions been able to purchase sufficient grain for their horses, mules, *tattoos*, and had to spare for Transport Train animals. The appearance of such a large body of men under arms may have suggested

the inadvisability of parleying with those who offered a fair enough price, and who might put in practice "the good old rule, the simple plan," if they met with a refusal. It was, perhaps, well that that feeling should serve for a little to draw out supplies, until, by intercourse with the leading men and the people generally, we could interest them in us, and awaken in them better and more powerful motives.

The state of the road, towards Antalo, where there happened to be one, and the making of one where there was not, are the next points for consideration. The foregoing chapter contained a general description of the country as far as Dongolo, to which little can be added until one's personal experiences shall have interpreted the exact signification of the expressions used regarding it by Colonel Phayre. It may, however, be stated that the Force which left Addigerat under General Collings had not found the obstacles, ascents, and undulations less formidable than they had been led to expect. But then it has to be remembered that nothing had been done to improve or clear the track; and that General Collings found it pretty much as Colonel Phayre had left it. Sappers, Beloochees, and a company of Pioneers were now at work on the most difficult parts, and it was thought that by this time the more prominent of them might have been smoothed down. It was always expected that a few weeks' work would have to be expended before baggage animals could march without serious let or hindrance to Antalo, but as no new and less manageable class of obstacles was anticipated, the state of the road was not considered likely to cause delay. Reports received from Colonel Phayre announced some twenty miles of limestone so smooth and slippery as to render the crossing of it an undertaking attended with considerable danger. Several of the sowars had had nasty "purls," which even

the greatest caution had sometimes been ineffectual to prevent, and the colonel stated that unless another track could be found where the limestone strata were less exposed, it would be necessary to cover the whole of these twenty miles with blinding of some sort—a work which would not only require time in the first instance, but which, it was to be feared, would stand in need of constant repairs. This rendered the itinerary less satisfactory than most had hoped it would be, slightly increased the chances of a stay being made at Antalo, or perhaps at Dongolo, the third station beyond Addigerat, and rendered the task of the transport department somewhat more arduous, and the date of its accomplishment more problematical. There was reason to fear, also, that forage would be found scanty at many stations; should such have been the case, it is difficult to see where the supplementary supply was to come from, and how it was to be carried. But so little was really known about the country or the road, even by Colonel Phayre himself, that none but croakers indulged in doleful vaticinations, for which, for aught they knew, next advices might show that there was no real ground.

As frequent mention has been made of the Signal party of Royal Engineers from England, some particulars regarding the objects for which they were sent to Abyssinia, with fuller details concerning their apparatus and equipment than have yet appeared, may not be uninteresting to military readers at any rate, who will in a year or two at most be made acquainted with the working of the system.

It is not difficult to imagine circumstances under which it would be impossible for a General to transmit orders to the different parts of his Force with that certainty and celerity which might be desirable, if not absolutely necessary, for the accomplishment of the object he had in view. A stray bullet might bring the gallop of an aide-de-camp to a premature conclusion, and entirely frustrate the plan of

battle which had been determined upon ; the nature of the ground might be such as to render speed impossible ; or a score of obstacles might intervene to prevent that rapid and reliable communication between different parts of an army in the field which is becoming more and more essential every day.

In order, therefore, to economise time in the transmission of orders and information, to secure greater certainty of despatch, and a corresponding degree of certainty of action, a system of field telegraphy has been worked out theoretically and experimented on in England, and the Engineers were sent to Abyssinia, among other things, to test it practically, as far as opportunity offered; to discover any defects that might exist in the apparatus, and the remedies experience might suggest for them ; and to spread a knowledge of the system in the army as far as possible. A similar system of field telegraphy was carried out successfully on a large scale in the American war ; hence the attention now being devoted to the subject in England.

The mode of signalling adopted is by long and short flashes, by the waving of flags in different ways, by long and short blasts on a horn or bugle according as circumstances render desirable. Each sign, flash, sound, or series of signs, flashes, or sounds, represents a certain number, the meaning of which can be immediately ascertained by reference to the code book with which every signal man is supplied. An infinite variety of lights and signals might be used, but the object is, of course, to secure efficiency without sacrificing simplicity.

The field signalling equipment, therefore, consists of the following articles :—the Chatham light for long range signals by night ; the hand light for short range signals by night, and which may be used as a hand-lamp for reading and writing ; a set of flags for signalling by day ; and a fog horn for thick and foggy weather.

The Chatham light consists of a small spirit lamp, protected by glass screwed on the top of a brass tube about an inch in diameter; under the lamp is a vessel containing an inflammable powder. By means of a bellows screwed on the tube, a strong jet of air can be forced into the vessel containing the inflammable powder. In consequence of the pressure thus created, the fine powder is forced up through two jets, the points of which are so arranged that the jets of powder proceeding from them are ignited by the flame of the spirit lamp, emitting a bright light, resembling in intensity the lime light. As the flame only lasts as long as the current of air is maintained by the bellows, long and short flashes can easily be obtained by long and short pressures. The powder employed is composed of three parts of magnesium, one part of powdered resin, and one part of lycopodium, well mixed together. The light produced by this means is visible for several miles, the distance depending upon the state of the atmosphere; in unfavourable weather, not absolutely foggy, the flashes can be made out at a distance of four or five miles. The hand lamp is an ordinary bull's-eye lamp, provided with a shade which can be moved at pleasure by means of a key or lever outside the lantern: it is equal to about three-quarters of a mile.

The flags are three in number—one black, one white, and one black and white diagonally. The black flag is intended for use when the background is light, as, for instance, sky, water, distant land, chalk cliffs, whitewashed walls, &c.; the white flag, when the background is dark, as trees, black earth, or rock, and the black and white, when the ground is of an intermediate type, as green or stubble fields and broken ground, against which black and white objects are equally visible. A party of the 33rd Regiment had already been trained in the use of these signals, and a party of the 4th King's Own was now practising every day.

The Engineers may have another short paragraph devoted to them and the telegraph, which was being rapidly constructed under the direction of Lieuts. St. John and Pusey. Communication between Senafe and Zoula had been established and perfect for some ten days, and would have been complete a month ago but for the great difficulty experienced in finding posts. A party of about a hundred and fifty men were now hard at work south of Senafe, while another party, who had arrived at Addigerat a few days ago, had commenced to work back so as to meet the others about half way. Measures had been taken beforehand to facilitate the telegraphists' work by collecting at Senafe, and along the route, a sufficient number of posts to carry fifteen miles of wire; and sufficient for at least ten miles had been brought to Addigerat by the natives. It was expected that this depôt would be in telegraphic communication with Zoula in about ten days, and that the line would be complete to Antalo before a move thence could be made. In respect of this, however, expectation was very wide of the mark.

The G-14th R. A. (Major Murray's Battery) came in on the afternoon of February 16, in splendid style. Though the road from Goona-Goona had been such as must have entailed an enormous amount of hard work upon both men and horses, all looked as fresh as if they had merely come in from review, and the appearance of the guns, which bore no trace of rugged ascents and rocky descents, would not have been inconsistent with such a supposition. The ghaut near Addigerat, which even horses and laden mules experienced considerable difficulty in descending, had formed no serious obstacle to the Armstrong twelve-pounders. The horses were removed and led round by the mule track, while the guns, guided by a few sturdy gunners, were let down the face of the hill by means of drag-ropes. The only accident the battery had sustained was

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the loss of a horse, which was caused by the giving way of an embankment and the slipping of a gun at a precipitous part of the road before entering Focada.

There was, no doubt, some difference of opinion as to the necessity for bringing a field battery up among these trackless mountains at all; but there was none as to the triumph that had been achieved in having marched such a battery through passes and defiles presenting obstacles such as no army ever before encountered, and in having landed it safely amid mountains 9,000 feet above the sea.

It was arranged that part of the battery should be left behind at this depôt, in order to ensure civility for the garrison from all-comers. This would be no difficult matter, especially after Kassa should have seen, as 'they said' he was to do in a few days' time, shell practice at 2,500 yards. This exhibition of the power of the English would, all felt satisfied, convince the youthful prince of their power and forbearance, as well as of the madness of attempting to appropriate a few kegs of commissariat rum, or a bag or two of rice, should, perchance, a continuance of rain render communication between depôts a matter of unusual difficulty.

The whole of the Beloochees had now arrived here; a detachment came in on the 15th, and the Head-quarters and remaining companies followed close upon the battery next afternoon. They are splendid fellows for the sort of work; for, not only can they make a piece of road well and quickly, but they look forward with positive pleasure to duty of any kind whatever. Their motto is "*Sirkar ka kaum hai, achcha kaum hai.*" With the G-14th also came the 4th Company Bombay Sappers; which had been told off to accompany Major Murray, and to improve any piece of road he might consider impassable.

Captain Hand, of the Rawul Pindee Train, had now been appointed Sub-Director beyond Senafe; and Lieut. Gaselee,

his staff-officer, was selected from the same quarter. The Punjabees were young men, but they possessed the requisite energy, without a redundancy of it, and did not lack judgment and experience.

Addigerat in sunshine is a very different place from Addigerat in shower. Our experiences of it under the latter circumstances were till yesterday almost *nil;* now, although we had doubtless much to learn before we should be able to leave the country, we knew how it could rain in Abyssinia, and that it was necessary to be in constant readiness for a rainy day. When tents were pitched to stand merely for a few days—here to-day, and gone to-morrow—the temptation to omit the elaborate precautions against wind and weather, which would be adopted without fail were the camp to be more stationary, was very strong. Because there was no "sound of abundance of rain" to-day, one hoped and at last believed that it would be the same to-morrow and the day after as well; so, when the evil day came, many were taken unawares.

Against the adoption of this *laissez-faire* policy in future, the lesson of yesterday served as a warning. After mid-day the sky suddenly became dark and lowering; and before any effectual measures could be adopted to turn aside the water, which it was *now* observed for the first time would gather on the slope above, and convert the side of a large part of the camp into a perfect puddle, the roll of Heaven's artillery behind the hills and the occasional heavy drops of rain which generally precede the regular burst, proclaimed that the enemy was upon us. For about an hour it came down heavily, the rain giving place at intervals to a pelt of hail, the rattle of which on the canvas completely drowned the noise of the thunder. To those who had a dry spot on which to sit or stand, the change may have been an agreeable one, and the patter of rain and hail on the roof, as the echoes of pleasant bye-gone days; but the majority who

were making ineffectual attempts to confine the water to one channel and prevent its invading every square foot of their floor, were in no mood to indulge in such poetic ideas. It was only a passing thunder shower, however, and so, as soon as the steed was fairly stolen, energetic measures were adopted to secure the door. Picks, spades, and tools which had never before been used for entrenching work were in great requisition, and so energetically were they plied that in an hour every tent was fortified against anything short of a deluge.

Next day the sky was clearer and the air cooler in consequence of the storm; but, Sunday though it happened to be, the entrenchments and fortifications which were to render the camp at Addigerat proof against Abyssinian warriors and Abyssinian weather, were being prosecuted with vigour. A space of about ten acres in extent, securing the water supply and accommodation on a hill for the wing of a regiment, a company of Artillery, a company of Sappers, the Commissariat and Transport lines, was being enclosed, partly by a wall, and partly by an outer and inner ditch, with a thick embankment between the two. A couple of the G-14th Armstrong twelve-pounders were to be put in position on the hill, so as to command both the road from Adowa and the road from Antalo, which formed a junction there, and which gave Addigerat much of its strategical importance. These guns and works would render the camp safe, no matter what rumours might float to Tigre from beyond the hills of Lasta.

CHAPTER VIII.

MAI WUHIZ, *February 18th.*

Terrible havoc had till now been made among the names of the various stations in Abyssinia occupied by British troops; and this place was similarly massacred, until a General Order was issued deciding once for all how it should be spelt in all official documents, and leaving the pronunciation an open question for each to settle according to his fancy, as had been done with stations north of Addigerat. It was by no means uncommon to hear the place at which we were encamped for the night variously termed Mai Wheez, Mai Whez, Mai Woheez, and by a dozen other appellations, of which the *w* and *z* were, as mathematicians would say, the only constant quantities.

This station was said to be thirteen miles from Addigerat, but as was generally found to be the case with all distances stated officially, the miles were unusually long ones.

Soon after five o'clock on the morning of February 18, the camp at Addigerat was all astir, except that portion occupied by the Beloochees who were to be left "in charge," and who had consequently no occasion to be up and doing at such an ungodly hour. The "moonbeam's misty light," and the blaze of the woodfires where a hasty breakfast was being prepared for the regiments, were for a time all that served to distinguish men from the gangs of mules moving hither and thither in search of their loads, or that aided in the capture of a few run-aways, which, with cooking pots and other tinkling utensils on their backs, were rushing helterskelter through the camp, spreading consternation in the ranks of the "mock train" generally.

By seven o'clock most of the baggage had been des-

patched, and at half-past seven the column marched under the command of Colonel Field. The Cavalry led off, followed in order by the Artillery (12-pounder Armstrongs) the Royal Engineers, 4th King's Own and 10th N. I. For several miles the road was exceptionally good, and the Infantry had hard work of it to keep the van in sight, but by and bye the unevenness of the ground necessitated several halts on the part of the Artillery, which became more frequent and tiring for those in their rear than was at all agreeable. Only at two parts of the road, however, did the battery experience any real difficulty; and at one of these they would have been at their journey's end for the day, had they not received assistance from the regiments in their rear. This was at one of Colonel Phayre's "rugged assents," which had been rendered passable enough for mules and baggage by the clearing of a zig-zag path up the face of the hill, but the angles were far too acute and much of the road too rotten to allow of the horses turning when yoked to the limbers. The horses had therefore to be removed, the guns unlimbered and dragged up the acclivity by means of ropes—an undertaking which occupied fully an hour and a half. Halts of ten and fifteen minutes' duration were frequent and unavoidable, considering the state of the road; but the safe arrival of the guns amply compensated in every one's opinion, for any little temporary annoyance that these stoppages might have occasioned. It was, however, thought by many that in a country like Abyssinia, especially as the army was not in daily expectation of coming face to face with an enemy, it would be better that regiments should march independently and not in large mixed columns like the present; and it was expected that after the morrow this plan would be reverted to. The march of the 18th occupied from 7-30 A. M. till 4 P.M., three hours at least more than it need have done, except

perhaps in the case of the Artillery. The consequence was that darkness was over all before either mules or horses could be fed.

The country between Mai Wuhiz and Addigerat is unquestionably more highly cultivated than any we had yet seen. The valleys are more extensive, the soil blacker and deeper, water more abundant, and irrigation a work of incomparably less difficulty than around Senafe or Focada. Many of the less elevated ranges, whose composition was exclusively of white or red sandstone, were covered with stunted junipers almost to their summit; the valleys were generally under cultivation, and the crops looked very promising. Many parts of the road, and all along the slopes, were covered with the most luxuriant thyme, which filled the air with its fragrance:—

> "Boon Nature scattered free and wild,
> "Each plant or flower, the mountain's child."

Dog roses, violets, peppermint, and wild clover in blossom were also far from rare, the last two growing abundantly by the side of the brooks, which, let me assure every one, even the most sceptical, were no mere tiny rills, but strong enough to have driven a threshing mill. Iron ore might be seen at various parts of the route; and from the weight and colour of the pieces picked up, the ore would probably yield a rich return if worked. We saw no villages, few people, and few cattle.

Mai Wuhiz was so situated as to afford excellent accommodation for a camp; the situation was elevated and dry, while in the valley a few hundred yards off there was plenty of water, the finest and clearest one could wish, besides lots of geese, duck, and snipe, so tame that the merest tyro could not fail to make a bag. Immediately after the arrival of the column, and before the Commander-in-Chief and his staff had come in, a violent thunderstorm

broke over the hill, accompanied, it is needless to say, with rain. Some were inclined to suspect that the rains might possibly turn out to be in February instead of in June. There was no means of deciding the point just then, so some cherished their suspicions, and others indulged in hopes to the contrary, till the next few weeks should place the matter beyond the region of doubt and speculation.

AD ABAGA, *February 22nd.*

If Prince Kassa of Tigre was, as there was every season to believe, really desirous of seeing an English army, it was fortunate for him that the column marching on Antalo with Sir Robert Napier could afford to spend a few days on its present perch without detriment to the Expedition in which it was engaged; for had there been either necessity or opportunity for expediting the march of the Force, His Highness, or by whatever august appellation he chooses to be addressed at home, would have been left to indulge his curiosity, at least till the return of the army from Magdala.

The column arrived at Ad Abaga on the afternoon of the 19th instant, and had been held in readiness to march on an hour's notice ever since; but still the actual start was postponed indefinitely, as Kassa was ever coming, but came not. Major Grant and Captain Speedy went out two days ago to ascertain the prince's whereabouts, and found him encamped with a mighty following not far from Howzen. As the country around Ad Abaga was totally unsuited for the evolutions of Cavalry and Infantry, and much more so for the display of Artillery, the meeting was arranged to take place on an open plain about five miles off, in the direction of Adowa. On the prince being asked to state when he would be at the trysting place, he answer-

ed "to-morrow"; but, though several to-morrows had come and gone, no scout yet announced his arrival. Even at the time most thought it would be unfair to the Ethiopic potentate to infer from his dilatoriness that he treated Sir Robert Napier's proposals with coldness, or was so blind to his own advantage as not to realize the benefits which must accrue to him from the projected visit.

The fact seems to be that the Abyssinians have as vague an idea of time as they have of distance: one day is with them as seven, and a week an indefinite period of time, of which it is very doubtful whether they can form even an inaccurate conception. The man was therefore to be pitied, rather than blamed and accused of giving himself airs of importance to which he had no claim. Even if this latter estimate of the young chief and his motives had been the correct one, he could scarcely be looked upon as singular on that account; it is by no means difficult to find, in the most enlightened countries of the enlightened West, persons who sometimes think more highly of themselves than they ought to think.

Besides, if there was reason to believe that Kassa was vainglorious and proud, the more reason was there for showing him the organization, the equipment, and the power of an English Army, assured that the remembrance of the approaching field-day would make him a wiser and a better man. If, as there was reason to believe, this prince desired to promote the well-being of his people, by raising them from the semi-barbarous condition in which they still are, by the introduction of art and science, and the encouragement of honest industry in place of the brigandage and pillage to which so many have hitherto trusted for subsistence, he would, all knew, be more than repaid—by the exhibition which awaited him, and by the example set by this army while within his borders—for all he had done, or could do, to further the object the Force had

in view. At the same time no one could deny the desirability of doing everything that could conveniently be done to enable the people, through whose country the Force was passing, to form a correct estimate of their nothingness when compared with it, especially as the English policy of paying for everything and wronging none might be misunderstood by them: indeed it was said in Tigre that Theodorus, having decided upon making a stand at Magdala, was cheering the hearts of his ruffians by declaring that the English daily proved themselves to be no soldiers, but merely mercantile people—"a nation of shopkeepers."

Several chiefs who had heard this rumour visited the camp at Ad Abaga in order that they might judge for themselves regarding its truth or falsity. The intelligent of these were shown the wonders of the Armstrongs and Sniders, upon which they expressed themselves perfectly satisfied that the nation which had invented and made these weapons must be eminently Christian! Then the elephants, of which two gigantic specimens were attached to Head-quarters, were another cause of extreme wonderment. The mysteries of the bursting shell and the graduated fuse may not have been fully comprehended by them; but they knew how wild and untameable was the elephant, that *monstrum, ingens, horrendum*, which roams among their own hills and mountains. When the exploits of the great Sabagadis are depicted on the walls of their churches, his slaughter of an elephant is always placed in a good light; and how much greater than even Sabagadis must the least of that nation be, which can not only kill the elephant, but catch him alive, tame him, and render him the most gentle and docile of creatures.

Having said thus much concerning the moral effect produced upon the minds of the Abyssinians, it may be mentioned that their religious feelings were not forgotten.

As a guarantee that we were of one faith with themselves, and that in all our dealings we were guided by truth and uprightness, the red cross of St. George, the patron saint of England and Abyssinia, was hoisted at the Commissariat depôts; and in front of the Commander-in-Chief's tent the same emblem floated side by side with the Union Jack.

The march from Mai Wuhiz to Ad Abaga was a long and tiresome one of fifteen Quartermaster General's miles. It was not generally known by what means Colonel Phayre arrived at his mileage; but it was universally agreed that if he had had no other means of measuring distance than by the use of the pair of good limbs Nature has given him, a very large percentage would have been added to the numbers hitherto recorded in his itinerary. It should never be forgotten that, next perhaps to a good night's rest and a good breakfast, the best preparation for a march is to know as nearly as possible the length of it and the difficulties that have to be encountered. These known, men make up their minds and brace their energies to meet them, and reach the halting-place without exhibiting many symptoms of fatigue; but when a regiment is told that it has ten miles to march, and the distance proves to be fourteen, the extra four tell terribly upon the men's spirits and powers of endurance. The camp was being looked for on the 19th instant while it was yet far off; every "gentle ascent" was climbed in the hope that the tents would be descried from its summit; but the dust and line of mules on the top of the next proclaimed at least one mile more; and before Ad Abaga came in sight, some had given up hoping and looking, and resigned themselves to "a night on't." When at last the camping-ground was reached, many were the enquiries for the officer who selected the site. Such a site! All that could be said for it was that it might have been worse.

Not only was the hill limited in extent, but its summit was, in a great measure, covered with prickly acacias and thistles, while its sides were ploughed land from which the crop had just been removed, and which needed only a slight shower to be converted into a perfect puddle. Had the last three miles or so been lopped off, an excellent site could have been found, with water and grass more abundant and more convenient; and the worst part of the road would have been avoided.

The road from Mai Wuhiz presented no great obstacle to the passage of mules and horses; even the guns went on at a rattling pace all the way, with the exception of a steep ghaut, down which they had to be guided by drag-ropes. For miles it led through meadows of the most luxuriant grass we had seen for years, amid which large and well-conditioned cattle were grazing contentedly; and there no road-making whatever was required. There were, however, many places where a few hours' work would have effected great improvements, and prevented many a mule load from coming off; and these seemed to have been entirely neglected because not altogether impassable. Nor had sufficient care been exercised in the demarkation of the road; for it led right over many a hillock, or through beds of choking sand and dust, when, had the engineer or inspector in charge but cast one glance around, he must have seen that it might have proceeded all the way on level and elastic ground. Young officers especially are apt to forget that hurry and speed are not synonymous terms, and to think of nothing else but a grand rush, through thick and thin, for Magdala.

Of course Sir Robert Napier, being himself an Engineer, did not require that any one should point out to him the imperfections and blunders which ought to have been rectified and avoided; and as His Excellency's opinion regarding the want of care or skill exhibited was

generally known, it was regarded as pretty certain that there would be less hurry and more speed in future. Captain W. Goodfellow had also been ordered to the front to exercise general supervision and direction. This officer's work on the Senafe ghaut proved him the right man for such work.

There was very little of the picturesque on a large scale between Mai Wuhiz and Ad Abaga; and yet there was not wanting much to please the eye. Here, where one would least have expected it, was a spring of water which only required to be deepened to make it run over; there, at the base of a lofty cliff and overshadowed by the leafiest of branches, a fine, deep, clear pool which made one long for a "header;" now a church hewn out of the rock attracted attention; and now we passed almost under the grey walls of a monastery, where, perhaps, the bare-footed friars were repeating their Paternosters, heedless "howe'er crowns or coronets be rent" by the Christian and Moslem bands daily marching by; or, it may be, they were "laughing, ha, ha," and "quaffing, ha, ha," the daintiest *tej* Abyssinia could afford.

The plains of grass were of surprising luxuriance, two crops evidently occupying the ground at the same time. Even although that the grass was withered and drooping, an ordinary bullock would have been quite lost in it; and what must it have been when green and in its prime! After the rains, the mountains, now white, grey, or red, must be one mass of green—grasses, mosses, ferns, and trees uniting to form a variegated covering; and then the country cannot but be extremely beautiful—

> "So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
> "The scenery of a fairy dream."

It was at this time considered probable that not a few members of the force would have an opportunity of remarking upon the contrast between now and then. Several villages were seen close by the road, but it would be

difficult to say whether they were deserted villages, the abodes of the jackal and the bat, or whether they were still tenanted by the people of the country. Even in best estate Abyssinian villages are not remarkable for finish or excellence of workmanship; and when surrounded, as they are in Haramat, by a mud and stone wall, with a once close but now delapidated barricade of stakes on the top, it would be impossible without close inspection to say what they are. The courtyard within generally presented a spectacle which puts the Irish hut completely out of countenance: cows, bullocks, goats, mules, asses, poultry, Abyssinian "pies" and Abyssinian people mingled there on perfect terms of equality, most of them united by that common bond which makes many an one acquainted with strange bed-fellows.

It is necessary to remark on the very little that had been done in the way of laying in stores of grain and grass for the Force by those who were believed to have proceeded to the front for that purpose. Communications were slow in Abyssinia; and nothing but time, perseverance, and tact could secure supplies except in the smallest driblets. At Mai Wuhiz the officers whose business it was to report specially upon the resources of the district, found "grain fair," "grass near," and plenty of ghee for the native troops; at Ad Abaga they found plenty of grain, forage, and ghee, and the chief men of the village agreed, for a consideration, to canvas for and collect these *articles de consommation*. So far so good; the pioneers went on, fondly hoping that the chief men would spend toilsome days and sleepless nights in order to return a full *quid* for the *quo* that was already safe in their wallets. The result was exactly what might have been expected: no store of either grain or grass awaited the arrival of the troops, and when daily purchases were not equal to daily wants, Indian gram had to make up the balance.

It is easy to be wise after the event; but if a similar Expedition has to be undertaken in future, young, active Commissariat officers, inspectors, and overseers will be sent on in advance, specially to buy up provisions and form depôts long before they are likely to be occupied by troops. *Then* the laying in of grain and grass would not be a farce, a delusion, and a snare, as was frequently the case in Abyssinia; and, moreover, a dollar would go three times as far as it did in Tigre. As matters stood now, a Parsee inspector would buy as much in one day as the whole of the pioneer officers put together could do in two. It should not be forgotten, however, that the officers in advance of the Force must have had duties to perform and privations to endure, of which nothing was generally known, although we were all reaping the benefit of them.

The amount of baggage and carriage, and the number of followers, public and private, allowed to the Force, was rapidly reaching the minimum. An order was published at Ad Abaga, ordering a reduction calculated to effect a saving of 3,500 mules for followers alone, and more than that number for departments and regiments: where 1,200 mules would be allowed to a regiment on the march in India, 187 were made to suffice in Abyssinia. A bell tent was in future to be allowed between the two senior officers of regiments and departments on the highlands, one between three other officers, one to ten staff sergeants, one to eight native officers, one to fourteen non-commissioned rank and file of European regiments, and one to sixteen of native regiments. An officer's personal kit was henceforth limited to seventy-five pounds, and the men's to twenty-five. No private followers were to be allowed, except a grass-cutter for every mounted officer's horse; staff, regimental, and battery officers were allowed a soldier servant each; and all civilian clerks were to be returned to Zoula, or to India if their services were not required in Abyssinia.

This cutting down, which would have caused a howl of indignation or dumb consternation in Bombay, or even in Zoula, was cheerfully acquiesced with in the interior, where the necessity for it was patent to every one. Captain Holland, Assistant Quarter Master General, had the pluck to propose it; and to this and still further reductions is due in a greater measure the success of the campaign.

News had at this date been received from Magdala up to the 30th of January, and from the king's camp up to the 23rd idem. Matters at both those places remained pretty much *in statu quo*. Nothing had transpired which could in any way help to a solution of the puzzling question at present occupying so many minds—viz., what Theodorus really meant to do when he reached Magdala? All the Europeans were well, up to date. The five Europeans and Mrs. Rosenthal who had been sent from the king's camp in custody of a detachment of troops had safely reached Magdala. Wakshum Gobazye was in the province of Wadela, following the king afar off. He had sent a sarcastic message to Theodorus, by whom the unfortunate wretch who brought it was immediately put to death. Theodore's camp-fires were said to be visible from Wakshum's position; but the latter was evidently afraid to venture on anything more serious with his majesty than a little mild chaff; nobody expected that he would attack him.

The peasants of Daoont had at last followed the example of those of Dalanta, and submitted to Theodore; nevertheless his progress towards Magdala was as slow as ever. So leisurely were his movements, that a fortnight longer had been given him than the time stated in last despatches. It was calculated that if he proceeded at the same rate he could not reach the fortress with his large guns before the middle of March; but the road was still open for him with a small retinue to ride in, in eight or ten hours. Provisions of every kind were said to be extremely scarce in his camp,

and desertions from his army to be of frequent occurrence. On one occasion even a chief of note took occasion of the cover afforded by the banks of the river to desert him. The news of a British force having entered Abyssinia was in every one's mouth, and formed the subject of conversation even in the king's camp; but Theodorus heard as though he heard it not, and had not, by word or deed, shown any sign of his being aware of the fact.

Menelek, the king of Shoa, still talked of aspiring to the throne of Ethiopia; but it was considered that he would attempt proving his title thereto by his pen rather than by his sword. Such was the state of affairs around Magdala according to last advices; and he would have been a clear-sighted politician who could divine the future without additional information. The fact is, none but a conceited man, who held his reputation for shrewdness very cheap, would have risked hazarding even a guess.

From the foregoing part of this chapter the distribution of part of the force will already have been gathered, and of that portion too around which most interest centres. General Collings' brigade was now at Antalo; it consisted of the Sind Horse, part of the 3rd Light Cavalry, the head-quarter wing of the 33rd Regiment, A-21st R. A., and two companies 10th N. I., one company Punjab Pioneers, 3rd and 4th companies Bombay Sappers, and two companies of the Beloochees, the last group of five, or part of it, being still at work on the road.

The head-quarter wing 3rd Light Cavalry, two-thirds G-14th R. A., head-quarters and detachment Royal Engineers, head-quarter wing 4th King's Own, and head-quarter and two companies 10th N. I., were at Ad Abaga.

Six companies of the Belooches and one-third G-14th R. A. were at Addigerat; the left wing 33rd Regiment and left wing 4th King's Own were *en route* from Senafe for Antalo, where they were to halt unless circumstances

demanded their presence and co-operation in front; the left wing 10th N. I., and the Khandeish Mountain Train Battery remained for the present at Senafe, where the 25th N. I. awaited being relieved by the 3rd N. I., when it would relieve the Beloochees at Addigerat, being itself relieved by the 18th N. I.

The other regiments were all below Senafe; at which station matters little. The remaining companies of the Pioneers were under orders to come to the front as soon as their services could be dispensed with; and the Marines as soon as carriage could be provided for them. Sir Charles Staveley was now expected to make his appearance at Ad Abaga any day, and a hearty welcome awaited him. He had been an invaluable head at Zoula; he rectified much that was wrong, and prevented much more from going wrong that would have gone wrong without him; and of the value of his services in this last respect it was impossible to form any idea.

The pack-bullocks of the country continued to do excellent service on the highlands; indeed it may be said that they were the stay of the Transport Department from Senafe right on to Antalo. The mules were, or at any rate had hitherto been, required for the transport of troops and followers; though, thanks to the zeal and ability of Captain Holland, Assistant Quartermaster General, in whose hands all questions regarding transport were now entirely left by Sir Robert Napier, a large number were set free at Ad Abaga for the exclusive use of the Commissariat, by the operation of the order above referred to. Yet, as no depôts had been formed between Addigerat and Antalo, troops marching between these places had to be provided not only with mule transport for their kit and stores, but had to be accompanied by a large convoy for the conveyance of the biscuit, flour, rice, rum, ghee, dhall, and the other requirements of a large mixed force, which only an old hand in the Commissariat

could enumerate off-hand. For this work bullocks would have been too slow of foot, and could never have kept pace with the column, much less have gone on ahead of it. It was only in the provisioning of large depôts that this agency could be turned to good account; and that it was being put to good account in this way, the following will prove.

On the 18th instant 400 bullocks were despatched from Senafe to Addigerat with a month's rice for a thousand men, a month's flour, six weeks' sugar, a month's dhall, and three months' salt. On the 19th, the same number of animals took on 1,500 bags of flour and rice, and similar loads on the 20th. The Commissariat officer at Addigerat forwarded to Antalo on the 19th instant 1,000 bags of provisions of various kinds, in addition to a month's flour for a thousand men; on the 20th, two months' flour for a thousand men, 200 bags of rice, 50 bags of sugar, and 50 of salt; and on the 21st, nearly a month's flour for a thousand men, 150 bags of rice (each bag containing about 75 lbs.), and 50 bags of sugar—all by the same agency. I selected these days' performances, not because they might be greater than those of the preceding days, but because they showed what was actually being done at date, and that there was every prospect of our being able to count upon for the future.

It is unnecessary to quote figures showing the quantities brought up to Senafe by the mules, carts, and camels of the Transport Train; the figures given above suffice for all purposes. On a rough calculation, there were at Senafe, on the 17th instant, two months' provisions for the European force then in the highlands, and one month's for the native. At Addigerat on the same date there was considerably over a month's provisions for Europeans, and the same for the native portion of the Force, making altogether three months' supplies for over 2,000 Europeans,

and two months' for over 7,000 natives, exclusive of the month's provisions sent on with General Collings' Force.

The great object was now to provision Antalo, where two months' rations for its garrison and the Force proceeding beyond must be laid in, before any movement of consequence could be made from that station. At least a like quantity must be at Addigerat, and double as much at Senafe.

CHAPTER IX.

AD ABAGA, *February 25th.*

The long-expected interview between His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief and Prince Kassa of Tigre came off at last, and, much as it had been talked of and formed a subject of wonderment during the past ten days, was soon in a fair way to become but a tale that had been told. It is impossible that a scene so new to most, and possessed of a certain amount of savage grandeur, can ever be entirely forgotten; but the record of the events of to-day must almost inevitably be stowed away in the pigeon-holes of the memory to-morrow, and remain there undisturbed as long as each day continued to produce fresh excitements, and to thrust other subjects of interest and speculation upon the attention.

Though the proceedings of the 25th of February, when Sir Robert Napier met the Prince, could not but exercise, every one knew, a desirable effect upon the progress of the Expedition, they had never been looked forward to nor regarded as other than purely accidental, and as forming no integral part of the work the Force had in hand. The desirability of acquainting the chiefs and people of the country, not only with the desire of the English to maintain friendly and pacific relations with all others than those

against whom the Expedition had been organized, but also with the resources and power of the English nation, had always been admitted; and more especially was this desirable when there was even the slightest reason to fear that those amicable feelings were not so cordially reciprocated as they might be. In that case, let the terror of the English name and an ever-abiding sense of the might of England compel the maintenance of friendly relations by a forcible appeal to the baser but powerful motives of self-interest and fear. Thus, while no one had supposed for a moment that this interview with the Prince of Tigre was necessary to the accomplishment of the object of the campaign, all agreed that desirable results could not fail to spring from it.

So long had Kassa been in making his appearance—it will be remembered that he was fully expected at Addigerat—and so little was known as to his whereabouts till his drums were actually heard on the *hill* over against the plain of Mai Deeyab, that many despaired of meeting him at all, and some had even gone so far as to doubt the existence of any such person.

When Sir Robert Napier arrived in Haramat six days ago, the prince was said to be at Howzen; a couple of days had him located at a village twelve miles from that place; and on search being made for him after two days more, it was discovered that he had not yet arrived even there. Signalmen were posted on the hill-tops to give due intimation of his Highness's approach, and spent a night *sub Jove* looking for him; but the Tigre chief slept soundly, nor dreamed, let us hope, what imprecations his want of punctuality evoked from the British soldier; or perhaps he ate his *tef* and drank his *tej*, regardless of what any one might think or say. On the 24th, however, news was brought into camp by Captain Moore, His Excellency's interpreter, who had been sent out to reconnoitre, which left no doubt that Kassa would be at the meeting-place next day; so arrangements

were immediately made for a start for Mai Deeyab on the morning of the 25th. Mai Deeyab is a plain about four miles N.N.W. of Ad Abaga.

Accordingly, by seven o'clock on the appointed morning, the following troops were *en route* for the plain, under the command of Colonel Graves, 3rd Light Cavalry—250 sabres 3rd Light Cavalry, G-14th Royal Artillery, 300 men of the 4th King's Own, two companies 10th N. I., and a detachment of Royal Engineers.

With greater punctuality than could have been expected, the noise as of many tom-toms, with now and again a screech as from a huge accordion or French fiddle with only one note, and that terribly out of tune, announced the approach of the Abyssinian army, which presently took up its position on the crest of a hill opposite the English camp. At the foot of this hill, and separating it from the grassy plain on which the evolutions were to take place, there was a stream (it would be termed a stream even in England,) which formed the natural boundary between what was looked upon as Abyssinian and English soil for the day.

At one o'clock, the hour fixed for the ceremonies to commence, Major Grant, Captain Moore, Captain Speedy, and Mr. Meertcha, (the two last in full Abyssinian costume) rode up the hill, attended by the 3rd Light Cavalry, to conduct the king into camp. While these officers were engaged in audience with Kassa, the Abyssinian colonels, captains, and officers of less degree were beating their army into shape; the drumsticks were plied with redoubled energy, and the women from the villages around cheered with one accord, their jackal-like yelping being, it is hardly necessary to add, heard above the din of pipe and drum. The mob when formed in order of march presented quite an imposing spectacle. The 'regulars' marched in front, in a compact column; behind them

came his majesty, only distinguishable from those around him by the umbrella of red silk, which in a hot sultry day is a very sensible emblem of royalty; and in the rear came a long line of 'irregulars,' marching with tolerable steadiness "by the centre," the whole thus forming a sort of T.

At the foot of the hill the army was met by Sir Robert Napier, who had ridden thus far on an elephant; and after salutations, the two, accompanied by their respective staffs, proceeded to the durbar tent, in front of which the guard of honour was drawn up, while the Abyssinians, to the number of about three thousand, remained on the opposite bank of the stream. Their arrival at the tent was announced by a *feu de joie* from the 10th N. I. and a salute from the Artillery, which produced an involuntary start throughout the ranks of the Ethiopians, followed by a few seconds of the stillest expectation, and then by the hum of mutual queries and explanations. The conversation at the durbar was not of a particularly interesting nature; not so interesting as it would have been had Kassa been a deep theologian, or had Sir Robert dipped into politics instead of the sameness of the English and Abyssinian articles of faith and religion. The impression left upon one's mind by this part of the conversation was that Kassa was not "well up" either in sacred or secular chronology. Perhaps, like old King Cole, he leaves all these matters to his 'secretaree'—"and it saved him a world of trouble."

Though Kassa was evidently ill at ease during durbar, he gave some of his answers with wonderful readiness and glibness. "He was never tired going to see a friend," and "the Abyssinians did not desire foreigners to come to "their country; but if foreigners did come, they would "rather see Christians and friends than enemies." At the conclusion of the ceremonies a handsome present was

made to the prince—the horse on which Sir Robert rode in the morning, a double-barrelled English rifle, and a set of elegant Bohemian vases. At three o'clock a review of the troops was held, after which His Excellency and staff escorted Kassa up the hill to his scarlet canopy, and were treated to the best cheer his commissariat afforded.

Kassa is quite a young man, of about five or six and twenty years of age. His features are extremely regular and pleasing, but feminine, indeed almost girlish, and indicative, one might even say, of indecision of character. Not so many of those about him, to whom one felt inclined in the most kindly spirit to apply the term of "hoary ruffians." Kassa's looks may, however, greatly belie his character; if they do not, he will often find it a difficult task to avoid being made a tool of by his chiefs, and to keep out of complications and difficulties for the burden of which he was not born. One could hardly help feeling an interest in the young king, and hoping that Sir Robert Napier, at the private interview, counselled him to "fling away ambition" of further conquest, and by governing wisely and peacefully his newly-obtained dominions, draw the hearts of the Abyssinians towards him.

Next morning Kassa paid a friendly visit to the Commander-in-Chief, which His Excellency looked upon as a more reliable token of sincerity than all the promises of the preceding day. Indeed, it should be said that Sir Robert, who is no mean judge of character, believes that Kassa has in him those qualities the exercise of which will make him a successful ruler and secure to his country that repose it so much needs. No one doubts Kassa's desire to see Tigre prosper, and his people happy.

EIKHULLUT, *March 1st.*

Having been constantly on the march since last letter was written, but few opportunities of collecting material for the

present letter presented themselves. A march of fifty miles through some countries would furnish matter for a dozen letters; but many parts in Abyssinia have very little to obtrude on the traveller's notice. The view from any one hill would in all probability be found almost precisely similar to that presented from the summit of any one of the fifty peaks around. The prospect in front would probably be bounded, at the distance of a couple of miles, by another hill, the exact counterpart of that on which you were standing; by the aid of a powerful glass the track up which the mules were toiling might be made out, stoppages and crowding here and there telling of some part more difficult to pass than the rest, or of some unfortunate brute whose strength had failed it in the way. In the valley below there would perhaps be a couple of acres of wheat or barley, sadly in want of a good shower to refresh its roots and to relieve its blade of the load of dust under which it is to a certainty all but smothered, a few acres of ploughed land upon which large stones lay thick as hail, and the rest all copse and jungle, in the outskirts of which two-score cattle are finding a bare subsistence, and the interior of which is monopolized by the birds and beasts of the forest.

The descent into the valley must be accomplished by a series of hops and leaps, taken with the greatest possible caution, but at the same time with what seems an utter disregard for one's personal safety. In many places, indeed, during this march, the track was so bad that it was infinitely preferable to eschew it altogether, and to wile one's way down through the junipers, prickly acacias, and thorns of smaller growth which constituted the jungle. Add to all this, that the traveller was grievously afflicted with what was well termed "mules on the mind," and it will be readily understood that at his journey's end he felt unequal to writing, except it might be a tale of "woes unnumbered"—an occupation which might be very pleas-

ant to the writer personally, but which would be far from profitable to the reader. The road, therefore, may be dismissed with the remark, that with the exception of the last nine miles, it was very bad and trying, and reflected no credit whatever upon any one connected with the making of it. It was everywhere stony and rough, and in many places excessively steep and narrow.

The country through which we had marched during the past few days was extremely poor and bare ; and that, too, though it was intersected by several streams of no small pretensions. But then each stream waters only its own narrow valley, and not even a Colonel Strachey or a Sir Arthur Cotton would ever dream of attempting to make it do more. Of course I speak only of these streams as we saw them ; when they are roaring cataracts even from the mountain tops, the matter might probably assume a very different complexion ; but as they were in March, any extended irrigation project would only have swamped the dollars of its promoters.

Scarcely a single village had been observed since we left Ad Abaga ; the cattle had been less numerous and in worse condition ; grain scarce, and fodder still more so ; locusts only seemed to be in a thriving condition. At Dongolo, the next camp beyond Ad Abaga, grass was abundant ; at Agoola it could scarcely be obtained at all ; at Dolo there was only chopped straw, (said to be possessed of admirable fattening qualities, if horses and mules would only eat it,) and at Eikhullut there was neither one nor the other ; dhoolie-wallahs, syces, and grass-cutters had to carry the remainder of the chopped straw all the way from Dolo. Water had, however, been abundant at all the stations, as well as on the road.

In order to hurry as rapidly as possible through a country so ill-fitted to support the Force, no halt, except to water baggage animals, was made at Mai Mukdum ;

the distance between Agoola and Dolo was accomplished in one march ; and a severe one it was. Of the whole fifteen miles I do not believe there were four over level ground.

Seeing that the road was so nearly impassable for men and mules, some curiosity will be felt regarding the manner in which the G-14th R. A., with their 12-pounder Armstrongs, acquitted themselves. Many and grave doubts having been expressed as to the advisability of bringing on field guns, in consequence of the nature of the country, it is the more pleasing to state that the progress of the Artillery had hitherto been such as to cause no delay worth mentioning, and but little anxiety. Everybody was surprised at the manner in which they surmounted the difficulties that met them at every hundred yards. Could the sharp corners only have been done away with, and a footing secured for the horses, good management and pluck would do all the rest. The steepest inclines were descended without detaching a single horse, and yet with such caution and coolness that it was almost impossible to entertain the slightest apprehension of mishap. When an unusually steep ascent had to be encountered, there was no lack of sturdy shoulders to push, and arms to pull, for Providence and Colonel Cameron and the officers and men of the 4th King's Own were ever ready to help those who did such wonders for themselves. With such facility did the battery surmount the most formidable-looking barriers, that it was dubbed the "Acrobatic Battery," a title of which the men seemed to be exceedingly proud, as well they might, for there could be no question as to its appropriateness. Where, however, British pluck and muscle will pull through, the hardest and toughest of Malabar teak will fail. A wheel of the forge waggon, which was to be "invalided" at Antalo, having showed symptoms of shakiness, gave way the other day, just before reaching Dolo ; and an elephant was sent out to

carry in the wreck. Material was luckily at hand to supply the deficiency, and no delay of any consequence resulted.

In order to obviate the necessity of putting the *materiel* of the limbers to too severe a test, sixteen elephants had some time ago been ordered up from Zoula to carry the guns over places which might be too rough for the horses to drag them. One was to carry the gun, another the wheels, another the limber, and the fourth the carriage. So, whatever opinion may have been entertained as to the necessity for bringing a field battery to the front, there could be no fear but it would go on as quickly as any other part of the Force; and, come what might, all felt that the credit of the Royal Artillery was safe in the hands of Major Murray and the G-14th.

One more march, and the head-quarters would be encamped five miles beyond Antalo. Great difference of opinion existed as to the probable duration of our stay there. Some believed Sir Robert Napier would see his way clear to advance in a few days; others believed as firmly that His Excellency could move before three weeks or a month. Everything depended on the questions of transport and supply, as everything had depended from the commencement of the campaign, and would continue to depend till its close. Now Antalo was bidding fair to furnish such quantities of wheat, barley, flour, and coffee as would most materially facilitate the work of the Commissariat and Transport departments in the meantime, if it could not be looked upon as a trustworthy mart a couple of months hence. On the 27th ultimo, 7,606 lbs. of grain, 2,880 lbs. of flour, 370 lbs. of bread, 130 lbs. of coffee, 90 lbs. of onions, besides large quantities of hay and wood were bought there; on the following day, 8,600 lbs. of grain, 7,777 lbs. of flour, 310 lbs. of bread, and sundries were purchased; and the same rates were expected to keep up for some time longer at any rate.

It is unnecessary to repeat what was stated in last chapter regarding the assistance rendered by the people of the country in the way of carriage; not only were they rapidly conveying stores to the front, but they allowed the mules of the Transport Train to be sent back to Senafe and other stations to bring on the five thousand men who had now for a long time been detained for want of transport. Opportunity did not present itself for procuring additional figures showing exactly the amount of work done, by which alone the value of their assistance must be estimated, but everything tended to show that they were not falling off in the slightest degree. During the march of the 1st, we passed hundreds of mules, donkeys, bullocks, camels, and Abyssinian men and women, all carrying flour or rice. There was now at Antalo, independently of what was on the road, a month's biscuit for 1,000 men, a month's rum, at least two months' flour, and of bullocks for slaughter there was no lack. At Senafe there was two months' biscuit for 1,000 men, four months' flour, two months' rice and abundance of vegetables.

These quantities may not appear large, seeing that the Force consisted of so many thousand men; but when the rice, flour, and other articles sent forward from the depôts *almost daily* are included in the calculation, it does not seem that there was any reason then to anticipate delay. It was rumoured now that rum and tea would not be issued beyond Antalo, on account of the great difficulty experienced in carrying barrels and boxes; the Abyssinians would have nothing whatever to do with them. To be deprived of his rum would, every one knew, be a great hardship to the British soldier; but all knew too that he would cheerfully endure it, knowing that their Commander-in-Chief himself knew by experience what it was to endure even greater privations than were likely to be imposed upon any one in the campaign in Abyssinia, and that he would not deprive the soldier of any part of his rations unless compelled by necessity to do so.

CHAPTER X.

ANTALO, *March 3rd.*

Sir Robert Napier and Staff, Sir Charles Staveley and Staff, and the column marching with them arrived at Antalo yesterday. It was now well known that there would be no prolonged stay made there; vigorous preparations were already in progress for a rapid move to Lat, two marches beyond Lake Ashangi; and it was expected that the Head-quarters, accompanied by the first brigade of the advancing Force, would be on the march in a few days at the latest.

The Pioneer Force, details of which will be given below, left Antalo on March 3 under the command of Colonel Phayre; indeed part of the Force had been at work on the road for several days, and was now about ten miles on. Thanks to the representations that had lately been made by the Commander-in-Chief regarding the state in which the road was generally left, the march from Eikhullut was an easy one, notwithstanding its length. The difficult and dangerous places encountered by Colonel Phayre had been avoided by keeping to the eastward of Antalo, which was situated about five miles N.N.W. of the camp.

The advantage of having the camp situated where it was, was two-fold; it was easier of access from both sides, and supplies, fodder, and water were abundant, whereas the country around Antalo was bare. For several miles on either side of the camp there were plains of grass—not the finest, it is true, but as good as could be expected, seeing that it grew on soil which had never felt the weight of a ploughshare. The number of troops encamped at Antalo, the vast herd of mules, and the hundreds of Abyssinians thronging round the Commissariat for purposes of merchandise, gave the place an appearance of strength

and importance which not even Senafe, in its palmiest days, ever presented. There were there, in addition to four Generals and their Staffs, (General Napier, General Staveley, Brigadier General Collings, and Brigadier General Merewether,) the G-14th R. A., A-21st R. A., 10th Company R. E., 3rd and 4th Companies Bombay Sappers, 3rd Light Cavalry; Sind Horse, head-quarter wing 4th King's Own, head-quarter wing 33rd Regiment, two companies of Beloochees, a company Punjab Pioneers, and head-quarter wing 10th N. I.

The camp was situated on a hill which had originally been covered with grass and stones; the former was rapidly disappearing, and the latter had been piled up into walls, forming regular streets, artillery parks, and enclosures of various kinds. Of course everybody rejoiced in the prospect of an immediate advance; but, had a fortnight's delay been necessary, many worse halting-places could have been found than Antalo.

The climate, so far as we had yet experienced it, was far more agreeable than that of Ad Abaga, Dolo, or Agoola. At these places the nights were bitterly cold; not frosty, for a heavy dew fell, accompanied by a piercing wind; in fact one might have fancied one's-self in England on a cold and raw October morning. At Antalo the days coincided more closely with one's recollection of English summer days than anything we had yet experienced, except perhaps at Addigerat. The sun was powerful; but a fine strong breeze (sometimes too strong for the single bell tents), blew from the eastward from eleven o'clock till late in the evening, rendering the heat of the sun perfectly endurable. In so severe a drought, chapped hands and noses were common spectacles, but the cuticle was rapidly becoming proof against even an Abyssinian sun and wind.

News had again been received from the captives at

Magdala—nine days later than that previously to hand. As in the previous budget, however, the letters of the 9th contained but little information, and nothing which could lead to a solution of the riddle which Theodore's conduct had for a long time set us to solve. The king had advanced with his army as far as the middle of the Djedda valley; but, finding his guns and baggage such a terrible burden to him, he was believed to have given up the intention of proceeding to Magdala with them, had occupied Dalanta, and was said to be fortifying himself there. There was no reason, however, to believe that he meant to give battle there, or to stand a siege.

The news of the advance of a British Force continued to spread, and to form the chief subject of conversation in the king's camp. Theodorus had not yet made any reference to the subject; but it was evident from questions he asked of the prisoners that his mind was uneasy, as well it might be, and that his remaining wits were at work to mature some line of policy with reference to it. The captives were also treated with greater consideration than formerly; and their guards had at the same time been increased and strengthened. Dalanta, we were told, was a strong elevated plateau, said by some to be even more difficult of access and management than Magdala itself. Little was known, however, regarding its real strength; and nothing definite was expected to be known, till the place had been thoroughly reconnoitred, or till the guns of the G-14th should have "let daylight through it."

Wakshum Gobazye continued to be, according to his own account, a most energetic and invaluable ally; and although he set about his plans of co-operation in a somewhat peculiar and not very intelligible manner, it was perhaps fair that Wakshum should be allowed to be the best judge of his own motives. His last letter to the Commander-in-Chief urged all haste, and contained assurances of

undying friendship. His manner of showing it was not quite so satisfactory as his professions; for he had just started for Debra Tabor, where he had heard there was a rebel whose co-operation he went to secure against the king. As we should soon be out of Kassa's country now, our policy towards Wakshum was plain. M. Munzinger had, therefore, been despatched as an envoy to that potentate bearing a letter from Sir Robert Napier and presents; and no fears were entertained but that we should find Lasta as open to us as Tigre had been.

The following distribution of the troops composing the force was ordered at Antalo :—

HEAD QUARTERS STAFF.

Colonel Dillon, Military Secretary.
Captain Hozier, Assistant do.
Captain Tweedie, Political Secretary.
Colonel Frazer, 11th Hussars, A. D. C.
Captain Scott, A. D. C.
Lord Hamilton, A. D. C.
Colonel the Hon'ble F. Thesiger, Adjutant General.
Colonel MacLeod, Assistant do.
Captain Holland, Quarter Master General.
Captain Pottinger, Assistant do.
Major Maude, Deputy Judge Advocate General.
Captain Moore, Interpreter.
Major Grant, C. B., Intelligence Department.
Captain Speedy, do. do.

1ST DIVISION.

The first division comprised all the troops from Antalo to the front.
Major General Sir C. Staveley, K.C.B., to command.
Lieut.-Colonel Wood, Assistant Adjutant General.
Major Baigrie, Assistant Quarter Master General.
Major Mignon, Commissariat Officer.
Captain Saunders, A. D. C.
Captain Arbuthnot, A. D. C.

PIONEER FORCE.

To march two days in advance.
Brigadier General Field, to command.

Captain Durand, Brigade Major.
Captain MacGregor, D. A. Q. M. General.
Lieut. Shewell, Commissariat Officer.
Captain W. Goodfellow, Field Engineer.
Lieut. Jopp, Assistant do.
40 Sabres 3rd Light Cavalry.
40 Sabres 3rd Sind Horse.
3rd and 4th Companies Bombay Sappers.
Two Companies H. M.'s 33rd Foot.
Two Companies 27th N. I. (Beloochees).
One Company 23rd Punjab Pioneers.

Colonel Phayre accompanied this Force, to survey the road and the country in its immediate neighbourhood.

1ST BRIGADE.

Brigadier General Schneider, Commanding.
Captain Beville, Brigade Major.
Captain Hogg, D. A. Q. M. General.
Major Mignon, Commissariat Officer.
Head Quarter Wing, 3rd Dragoon Guards.
3rd Light Cavalry.
3rd Sind Horse.
G-14th R. A. (four guns).
A-21st R. A. (Colonel Penn).
4th King's Own Royal Regiment.
Head-quarters and 8 Companies 33rd Foot.
Head-quarters 10th Company Royal Engineers.
Head-quarters and 2 Companies 27th N. I.
Head-quarters Wing 10th N. I.

2ND BRIGADE.

Brigadier General Wilby, to command.
Captain Hicks, Brigade Major.
Captain Fawcett, D. A. Q. M. General.
Major Bardin, Commissariat Officer.
Head-quarter Wing 12th Bengal Cavalry.
B-21st R. A. (Twiss).
Two 8-inch mortars, detachment 5-25th, R. A.
Rocket Battery Naval Brigade.
K Company Madras Sappers and Miners.
Head-quarters and 7 Companies Punjab Pioneers.
Wing 27th N. I. (Beloochees).

2ND DIVISION.

All troops at and from Senafe to Antalo composed the Second Division.

Major General Malcolm, Commanding.
Major Bray, Assistant Adjutant General.
Captain Watts, D. A. Q. M. General.
Major Leven, Commissariat Officer.

ANTALO GARRISON.

Brigadier General Collings, to command.
Major Quin, Brigade Major.
Captain James, D. A. Q M. General.
Lieut. Hore, Commissariat Officer.
Wing 12th Bengal Cavalry.
5-25th R. A.
Head-quarters and H Company Madras Sappers.
45th Foot.
3rd Regiment N. I.

ADDIGERAT GARRISON.

Major Fairbrother, to command.
Squadron 10th Bengal Cavalry.
Two guns G-14th R. A.
Head-quarter and 2nd Company Bombay Sappers.
Wing 25th N. L. I.

SENAFE GARRISON.

Lieut.-Colonel Little, Commanding.
Lieut. Beck, 21st N. I., Staff Officer.
Captain Edwardes, D. A. Q. M. General.
Major Thacker, Commissariat Officer.
Squadron 10th Bengal Cavalry.
1 Company Native Artillery.
3 Companies 21st Punjab N. I.
Wing 10th N. I.
Detachment 21st N. L. I. (Bombay).
Head-quarter Wing 25th N. I.
Depôts of all regiments in advance.

ZOULA COMMAND.

To be composed of all troops at Zoula and in the Passes.
Brigadier General Stewart, to command.
Captain Fellowes, Brigade Major.

Captain Roberts, V. C., Assistant Q. M. General.
Major Gammell, D. A. Q. M. General.
Captain Hawkes, Commissariat Officer.
Squadron 10th Bengal Cavalry.
G Company Madras Sappers.
1st Company Bombay Sappers.
2nd N. I. Grenadiers.
18th N. I.
Head-quarters and 5 Companies 21st Punjab N. I.

The prospect of a speedy advance was daily brightening, as has been said. General Merewether's convention with the Abyssinians was working splendidly, and more bullocks were offered to carry bags than there were bags to carry. Trade protection of the Sheffield order consequently manifested itself occasionally, a clique or union endeavouring to secure loads for their cattle, by the forcible exclusion of all outsiders. But there were officers in the Commissariat perfectly equal to any occasion of the kind, and none more so than Major Mignon, who was in more ways than one as Saul among his brethren—head and shoulders above them all. None could bamboozle an obstinate Shoho into carrying an awkward parcel of goods as Major Mignon could, and make him believe, too, that he had decidedly the best of the bargain; and certainly few could so quickly put down a manifestation of Sheffieldism or a row among the aborigines by a flourish or two of a good stout stick. So pleasantly did Mignon deal a playful blow when necessary, that the Shoho who received it took it quite good-naturedly, but showed no inclination to deserve another.

The daily purchases at Antalo were not only keeping up to the figures quoted in the former part of this chapter, but were even greater. More than ten thousand pounds of flour were bought on the 3rd, and grain and ghee enough to meet all the requisitions of the large Force encamped there.

CHAPTER XI.

ANTALO, *March 7th.*

Wednesday last was a great day in the town of Antalo; for not only was its weekly market larger than it ever was before in the memory of even "the oldest inhabitant," but the demand for most goods exposed for sale was greater than the supply, and the prices were all that the most avaricious and needy savage could desire. Corn and flour, milk and honey, ghee, salt, skins, cattle, coffee, tobacco, and all the other articles of merchandise usually seen in Abyssinian stalls, were eagerly bought up as soon as they were exhibited, and were paid for on the spot, not by the clumsy system of barter, but with the brightest of Maria Theresas. Dealers who had never visited Antalo since it was sacked, and its inhabitants put to the sword, by the plundering Gallas, might that day be seen on every side, some attracted by the hope of gain, and others by a desire to see for themselves the strange things that were taking place around their ancient burgh, and to rejoice in its returning greatness.

Besides the articles enumerated above, others fetched an equally high price which had never before been marketable commodities in Enderta. Antiquarians and archæologists ran after all sorts of lumber, wisely forbearing to ascertain to what different uses it had been put before, as the discovery might have been unpleasant in itself and subversive of some ingenious pet theory of their own. Eremites and friars,—concerned at the sight of so much dross and mammon finding its way into the hands of the godless and improvident—resolved to divert the stream in the direction of the Holy Church of St. Peter, which overlooked the fair. So they brought forth all the spare gospels, crucifixes, and communion plate which the sanctuary contained; and these,

too, commanded a ready sale. Frugal housewives—if indeed either frugality or housewifery is known in Abyssinia—sold at fabulous rates the tej they had just brewed for household consumption, converting their houses for the nonce into restaurants, or *cafes chantants*, which "drove a roaring trade." Another kind of traffic obtruded itself upon the public view with a persistency and frankness which would put even the classic regions of Haymarket, Leicester-square, and Westbourne Grove to the blush; but as correct opinions are generally entertained regarding the morality of Abyssinian women, the subject may well pass without further remark.

Antalo is situated on the brow of a lofty sandstone hill, and its background is composed of still more lofty hills of the same formation. Though only four or five miles distant from the camp, with nothing to intercept the view, the town was for the greater part of the day quite invisible, and at best it could only be seen as a dim streak, when the rising or setting sun made the shadows lengthen. The hill was red, the houses were red as well, and only a small clump of trees around the church marked the locality.

Viewed from the camp, there was absolutely nothing to induce one to pay a visit to the place, and the accounts of those who had visited it, did not generally supply the deficiency. So rough was the intervening plain, so steep and trackless the mountain side, that few would have undertaken the uninviting journey without artificial inducement to do so. In the first place, however, Antalo was marked on the maps in large letters—far larger than its importance and size entitle it to; in the second place, it had been made one of the great landmarks on our way to Magdala; and in the third place, it was visited by Sir Robert Napier, who courteously invited a party to avail themselves of the guarantee of safety and respectability afforded by his escort of 3rd Light Cavalry.

Much as the track across the plain would have tried the patience and temper of many equestrians, it presented no difficulties to those who had been so trained to pick their way, as every member of the Force beyond Senafe had been. Very different, however, was the ascent of the hill, which could only be made by a track which was not merely steep and narrow, but which led over cart-loads of smooth rounded rocks and boulders the whole way. It was a first-rate specimen of an Abyssinian road, up which not even pedestrians could climb with safety; and unless the approaches from the other side present less difficulty, it is surprising that even savages should not see the advantage of holding their market in the valley below, in times of peace at any rate.

Antalo must have been a large town a few years ago; at present about two-thirds of it are in ruins, and its population cannot much exceed four thousand. Ruined as it is, it has a few streets radiating from the market-place, the houses on either side of which are strongly walled and otherwise fortified. The town has not long remained in its present delapidated condition, and efforts are being made to effect its restoration. A few years ago cholera visited this part of the country, and raged with great violence in Antalo and the surrounding villages, one or two of which remain uninhabited to this day. Soon after the cholera, another plague swept over it, in the shape of hordes of Asumo Gallas, from the country between the Geror and Kualima Ala rivers, led by a brother-in-law of Kassa's, who, at the time of our visit, was living in rebellion in an amba on the top of a mountain a few miles to the southward. These finished the work of desolation which cholera had begun. The inhabitants who escaped the sword fled, and have never yet returned to rebuild what the Gallas threw down. Every inducement to return is being held out by Prince Kassa, who has remitted all tribute and taxes for three years, in the hope that Antalo may again

occupy its former position of importance, and regain its prosperity.

Sir Robert Napier was fretting and fuming terribly at the unlooked for delay imposed upon him in Enderta; but he is too wise and prudent a general to have dreamt of allowing his wishes to get the better of his judgment. Ever since His Excellency's arrival, he had daily considered the chances of being able to advance on the morrow. We were perpetually about to move, yet never moving, in consequence of the news received from the front. Till now delays had been rendered necessary mainly by scarcity of provisions, and while these were being collected, the Sappers and others were hard at work on the road beyond; thus, by the time the Commissariat was well supplied, the way was clear for an advance of four or five stages.

The time and labour required for road-making were therefore less prominently before one's mind than would have been the case had a few days' halt been enforced solely by inability to proceed in consequence of rocks and precipices in the way. The state of things was now reversed: the provisions were ready, but the roads were not, and hence the stay at Antalo. The Pioneer Force under Brigadier General Field had been busy during the whole of the past week; but so great had been the difficulties to overcome, that Captain Goodfellow could not yet report the road passable. Two companies of the 33rd Regiment and a company of the Punjab Pioneers were hurried forward to aid; but it was quite doubtful whether, even with their assistance, the work could be acomplished before another week. A cheerful prospect truly!

Some slight interruption was caused a couple of days ago, by a sort of panic which seized the officers at the head of the Pioneer Force, and for which, as it appeared, there was no good reason. "From information received," as they would say in Scotland Yard, Colonel Phayre con-

cluded that an attack by the Gallas was imminent; General *Field* was likewise seized with a feeling which presaged troubles ahead, and immediate measures were taken to save the Pioneer Force from annihilation. Guards and piquets were doubled, and strong outposts stationed all round, leaving hardly any one to handle the pickaxe and crowbar, while those who did remain, were so fatigued from the extra duty imposed upon them that the work was all but suspended.

Caution is at all times commendable, more especially when important interests are at stake, but excessive timidity may be productive of disastrous effects as well as excessive hardihood or rashness. When generals in command of Advance Forces give way to groundless fears, and act as if fierce bands of bloodthirsty foes crouched behind every rock and thicket, ready for the spring whenever they found their victim off guard, every time some lying rumour reaches their ears, the most natural thing would be a panic through a whole army, or unpreparedness when the cry of "Wolf" bespeaks real danger.

The "scare" seems to have originated from an old Abyssinian dodge with which one would have thought Colonel Phayre could not by this time have been altogether unacquainted. One chief would come up, declaring himself a most excellent man and a staunch friend, and denouncing his rival as a blackguard and dangerous foe, whom it would be good policy to put out of the way at once. The Gallas were not, perhaps, so tractable and useful as the Shohos and Abyssinians of Tigre had been; but there was not the slightest ground as yet for anticipating any trouble from them. They had, indeed, killed one lustful grass-cutter (ghora-wallahs were now called grass-cutters) and maimed another, *more suo;* but it was generally believed that they had received provocation which sufficiently accounted for the deed, if it did not justify it. Some of their chiefs had

already paid a visit to the camp, where they were kindly treated and sent away with presents, highly pleased with all they saw and heard.

The Gallas are a more warlike and independent race than those of the north; but the display of strength presented by the Force, judicious management, and dollars proved as effective among them as they had done elsewhere. The mention of dollars reminds me that the store at Antalo had now almost become exhausted, and that it was at one time doubtful whether the advance would not have to be delayed till a few more mule-loads should arrive. It was out of the question that dollars should be allowed to cause an hour's delay in an expedition like that on which we were engaged, for while to advance was costly, to delay might be ruinous. We knew not, like Dr. Cumming, the signs of the times and seasons, but we knew that every day brought us twenty-four hours nearer the rains, to flee from which would be, after the rescue of the captives, the main object in view. It was the certainty of their approach, coupled with the uncertainty as to how soon the windows of heaven might be opened, that rendered stoppages like the present so hard to bear with equanimity. There was only one satisfactory consideration connected with the detention —that the Force was being all but wholly maintained on the daily purchases, and that it was not eating up the flour, biscuit, and gram carried all the way from Zoula by the primitive means of transport it had been necessary to adopt.

As the old adage has it, "It's an ill wind that blaws naebody gude;" and trying as these delays must have been to the patience of Commanders-in-Chief, Major Generals, Brigadiers and others, and unfortunate for the progress of the campaign, they were the salvation of the mules, mokes, tattoes, *et hoc genus omne*, which picked up surprisingly during a few days' rest, when they could eat their fill at any hour of the day or night that best suited their convenience.

Sir Charles Staveley reviewed the troops encamped at Antalo or the morning of March 7th ; and though the whole of the first division had not yet arrived, the display was a more imposing one than that corner of the African continent had beheld before, or may behold for some time again. There were present a detachment of Royal Engineers, two batteries of Artillery (G-14th and A-21st), the 4th King's Own, the right wing 33rd Foot, right wing 10th N. I., and the 3rd Light Cavalry.

A detailed account of the various manœuvres is not necessary : suffice it to say that they were executed in grand style round a deserted village, which was by common consent, and the will of the General, constituted the key of the position. Everything went off in the most satisfactory manner, except an obstinate shell fired from one of the A-21 mountain guns, which would not go off at all. The gun went off all right enough, but the shell instead of exploding and scattering death and destruction in a hundred different directions, only ricocheted as any prosy round shot would have done. Nor was this all ; for when, after the lapse of some time, a party of Engineers was despatched to find the recusant bomb, that the cause of its peculiar behaviour might be enquired into, it would not for a long time be found by them alive or dead. These guns did wonders at Sheerness, and made good practice at Zoula ; but that, said good-humoured critics, would only make matters more aggravating, should they refuse to perform what was expected of them when Magdala, Dalanta, or any other eyrie in mid-heaven came to be shelled. No serious doubts, however, were entertained on this score, and I merely mention the incident, as it gave rise to some amusement and good-humoured 'chaff' after the review. The fault must have lain in the shell or fuse, not in the gun. If the shell was a 'duffer,' it was much better to be dropped in time, than carried longer in Colonel Penn's locker.

The site of the Antalo camp did not give satisfaction to the Commander-in-Chief, and there was great talk of having it moved on the departure of the Force now quartered there. The objections were entirely strategical, yet so palpable, that it was surprising they should not have occurred to the officer who first marked out the camp. About four hundred yards from the hill, or rather hillock, upon which the camp stood, was another which commanded it, and from which a few thousand foes might do no small amount of injury before they could be dislodged. In addition to this, the water supply could not be secured without an unreasonably extended system of entrenchment and fortification, whereas from the other hill it could be protected with ease.

Not only was greater care now being exercised in the selection of strong positions for all camps, especially those which were to be standing camps, but the cordons of sentries and piquets were made so compact and changed so frequently, as to render it impossible for any loafer, or body of loafers, to pass without being challenged, or to approach within half a mile of the camp without being immediately subjected to scrutiny. Piquet drill was occasionally ordered in the morning, in order that the soldiers might become acquainted with each other's relative positions in the dark, and that uniformity and system, which conduce so greatly to efficiency, might be maintained night after night. There may not perhaps have been much occasion to expect that night attacks would actually be made upon any part of the Force; but as that was a favourite mode of procedure with Theodorus and the Abyssinians generally, and one which might, if well carried out, cause a panic among the steadiest troops, provision was very properly being made against it. The other night, when the camp was as still and quiet as if not a soul were in it but the sentries, the alarm was sounded in the lines of the mountain gun

battery, and the order to turn out passed from tent to tent. In an incredibly short space of time, and without noise or confusion of any kind whatever, the guns were run out and placed in position, ready to scatter shell among the ranks of the enemy supposed to be ascending the hill, after which the men returned to their tents, and the whole was over before those occupying the next lines knew that anything unusual had taken place.

These "Theodore guns," as the mountain guns were called, are admirably suited for use in the event of any assault being made on a camp by night. Their lightness is such that a couple of men can drag them about as easily as they would a wheel-barrow; two more follow up with a dozen rounds of shell, and the first intimation that the enemy would receive of the Artillery's being awake, would certainly on every occasion be from the cannon's mouth.

M. Munzinger, who, it will be remembered, was now on his way to Wakshum Gobazye with presents, was last heard of at Ashangi. He found the road not so very difficult as we had been led to expect, while grain, flour, water, and fodder were to be had in any quantity. Game, too, of all sorts and sizes, from the monarch of the field down to the timid little coney, was abundant; and the news set shekarries, old and young, all in a flame, burning with high hopes of sport worthy of mighty hunters.

It may here be mentioned that the villagers repeatedly brought into camp "khubber" of lions, which they said had for some time been making great havoc among their flocks; but none had yet been seen. Hyænas prowled round the camp nightly, coming to within a few yards of the tents, and one or two were shot; jackals were a perfect nuisance; they came in herds, and their yelping and barking all over the plain made night hideous. Hare, duck, partridge, guinea-fowl, plover, and wild geese were brought into camp daily; and the shooting

of them entailed no great labour upon the sportsman. There was a great demand for rifles and guns, which were eagerly bought up by the Political Department as presents for the different chiefs who might pay their respects to His Excellency; but the news from the front led to the breaking off of all negotiations not finally completed. It was the usual practice—and a very good one too—to retain one's gun till all the powder and shot had been exhausted, and then to dispose of it to the Commander-in-Chief for the price of a new one.

Major Grant, C. B., had already proceeded to Attala, the third stage beyond Antalo, to undertake Commissariat duties. The Commissariat department was sadly under-officered. More deputy-assistants and inspectors of all classes were and had been required, and but for the surprising capacity for organization and work possessed by the officers here, the department must have caused endless trouble and annoyance all through the campaign. An officer of Major Grant's ability could not but be an invaluable man in any capacity, and no doubt he bought corn, and flour, and ghee as well as the most experienced Assistant Commissary General could have done; but only the exigencies of the service could justify his being sent on such a mission. In addition to the mere matter of establishing and storing the depôt, Major Grant would of course enter into negociations with as many chiefs as he could lay hands on, and, if possible, make them zealous contractors.

CHAPTER XII.

ANTALO, *March* 11.

The first brigade had frequently been under orders to hold itself in readiness to march on the morrow, but before the memo. or G. O. had well gone its rounds, something invariably occurred to render another day's postponement absolutely unavoidable. On one occasion, and luckily as it turned out, the mules had gone out to grass, under Captain W. W. Edwards of the Madras Cavalry, as great herdsman, and could not be summoned in before nine o'clock next day. On another, it was discovered that the dollars had been all but expended, and that remittances from Senafe must be awaited; while on a third a copy of the journal kept by Captain MacGregor, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General with the Pioneer Force, was received just in time to prevent a start being made.

Captain MacGregor, as he said himself, was not an Engineer, and could not give a professional opinion upon the state of the road, or the time it would take to render it passable, but he had been in all parts of Sikkim and Bhootan, and never, except in one or two instances, had he seen such country as that beyond Antalo in the direction of Musnoo. His journal, which was dated the 8th of March, and written at Musnoo, the second stage beyond Antalo, stated that at least six days would be required to render the road in any way fit for traffic. A narrow track, so narrow that a mule could hardly squeeze itself along, wound between boulders and rocks of such huge dimensions as to form perfect ravines at every turning; and for miles there was not a yard where an elephant could place its foot with safety. The ascents were steep and dangerous, the descents were still more so; and the easiest parts of the whole looked exactly as if stones and rocks had been

so placed by the Titans as to render the passage of a laden animal an utter impossibility.

Those who could have access to Colonel Phayre's reports knew what the substance of those reports was; that officer's journal was treated as strictly confidential at Head Quarters, and perhaps there may have been good reason for so treating it! But there was one question which suggested itself with reference to his reports, viz., how it happened that they had never yet shown, as Captain MacGregor's did, the folly of even hoping to advance till all the obstacles enumerated above had been removed. Some, whose position ought to have guaranteed their being well informed, even doubted whether Colonel Phayre had reported on the road at all; but he left Antalo on the 2nd inst., and it would be doing him a gross injustice to suppose that he had been other than busy all the time, giving every other day an account of his stewardship.

Whatever may be laid to Colonel Phayre's charge, no one can justly accuse him of shirking toil; he delighted in it; and lucky it was for him that he was possessed of a Herculean constitution and frame. But it is well known, at the same time, that Sir Robert Napier had not, up till this time, understood the road to be so difficult as it undoubtedly was; for an officer who served on the staff during the little war in Bhootan, as Captain MacGregor did, could not but be capable of forming a reliable opinion as to where an army could go, and where it could not. Besides this, Captain MacGregor expressly guarded against the possibility of its being supposed that he was exaggerating by stating his firm belief that his report would not convey a sufficiently vivid idea of the difficulties in the way, and by showing his journal to Captain Goodfellow of the Royal Engineers. It is sufficient testimony to the fidelity of the above description, to state that five horses died on the road in as many days, some over-

come from fatigue, and others having to be shot in consequence of fractured limbs or dislocations. Not a pick had been raised, nor a mile surveyed, beyond Attala (about thirty miles on), and we had no guarantee, and but little reason to suppose, that the country was essentially different from that on which the Pioneer Force was now engaged.

Supposing, then, said many an one anxious to proceed, that every day's march were not to require six or eight days to make it passable, but say three, and the probable date of our appearance before Magdala might be calculated with some approach to accuracy. There was an impression abroad that the Force would reach its destination in a month from this date, that it would pass Ashangi, Lat, and Wadela, staying not for brake, nor stopping for stone, but, like Johnny Connell's boys in the old Garryowen song—

> " O'er the hills like hayroes fighting,
> " And tayring all before them,"

—an impression which was said to be shared even by Sir Robert Napier. His Excellency had all along said that we should " get on splendidly if, we had no bellies ;" and if we had had no bellies, but wings instead, it seemed possible that we might reach Magdala in a month. As it was, however, Magdala was believed to be about 160 miles away, and we had not wings that we could soar, but only feet that we might climb, perhaps at the rate of ten or fifteen miles a day. Allowing, then, three days as the average time required to clear ten miles of road, the deduction, plainly enough, was that our advent at Magdala could not be long before the first of May. But the premiss turned out to be erroneous, as but little road-making was indulged in beyond Antalo ; so the conclusion arrived at was equally erroneous as well.

Letters had now been received from Magdala up to the 17th of February, and from the King's camp at Dalanta up to the 12th idem. Beyond that the

captives were all in good health, these letters contained nothing of any public interest. Theodorus seemed to have snugly settled himself in Dalanta, and was showing no indications of any intentions to continue his march towards Magdala. He had at last opened the subject of the expedition to Mr. Flad, but carefully refrained from expressing the shadow of an opinion regarding it, and from giving the faintest clue to his feelings or intentions. The captives themselves expected either to be visited by His Majesty soon, or to be sent for by him; but they had evidently no better means of knowing the King's mind than others who were not in correspondence with him, and who had only his actions to judge by.

Wakshum was at Eiba (or Eiva), on his return from Debra Tabor. The people of Tigre fondly hoped that Sir Robert Napier would find it necessary to inflict such a chastisement upon Theodorus as should effectually prevent his setting scores with them after our departure; and besides this wish, and the unanimous and burning desire of the Force, there were other powerful reasons why we should manifest a little of our power upon him. It was evident that, not till Theodorus had been beaten till he had not a leg to stand upon, would the peoples of Abyssinia believe that the English were really superior to him. Every one in any degree acquainted with Abyssinian habits and modes of thought, was persuaded that if the English left the savage Negus in anything approaching to the position in which they found him, rumour would immediately and for ever proclaim throughout the whole of Ethiopia that European armies feared him quite as much as did those of Tigre, Lasta, and Shoa. Only a decisive defeat would lead savages to respect civilization and progress, and drive them to think that there was much they had yet to learn, to seek intercourse with more civilized races, and all those blessings that flow from or accompany civilization. The

more one saw of the Abyssinians, the more satisfied must he have become, that if the Force had to leave the country without a battle or two, the captives might (must) be safe, but only half the object of the expedition would have been accomplished. The captives would be safe; but the moral effect would be nowhere.

The Abyssinians liked us all very much, and would have rejoiced to have the English rule over them for ever, because they never before were enriched, but impoverished, by armies within their borders. Whether they yet respected the English is another thing. They had heard that the English paid honestly for everything they wanted in India and other countries they had conquered, that the church was not allowed to rob and squeeze the people, and that a renumerative amount of the produce of the soil was always left to the cultivator; and they wished it were thus with them, from whom the priests extorted two-fifths, and the prince two-fifths more. But they had no idea that our power to-day was other than a mere accident, or that it had been worked out by slow and painful degrees, and that they must imitate if they would be like us. Only a conquered Theodorus would compel them to do this.

While rumours of threatened attack had been coming from the front, news of actual looting was received from the rear. A chief who had never manifested any friendly feeling towards the English—being, it was believed, the same man who put his veto on Captain Pottinger's survey two months ago—had attacked a convoy near Focada, and after overpowering those in charge of it, wounding two severely, made off with thirty donkeys and their loads of rice. A hue and cry was raised, and a company of Beloochees despatched in pursuit, but doubts were entertained as to the likelihood of their catching the bold freebooter. It was absolutely necessary that outrages of the kind should be put down and punished with a strong hand; and it would

have been a piece of fortune which the Senafe garrison did not expect, if its disappointment at being detained in the rear had been compensated for by its drawing "first blood" in the expedition.

But it was not so to be. The convoy attacked was a native one, which was an additional reason for vigorous pursuit. If the Abyssinians and Shohos had not been made to feel assured that their lives would be protected as well as Commissariat rice, while they were engaged in Commissariat service, the valuable assistance they had hitherto rendered and were still rendering, would quickly have ceased altogether. Looting on a smaller scale had also occurred near Sooroo.

The Transport Train on the highlands happily continued to do excellent service, and to require no extra departmental assistance or attention. The same can hardly be said of that below Senafe, regarding which frequent complaints were received, both from the Commissariat officers and from the Brigade authorities. Colonel Warden and his officers were vigorously doing all they could, but it was clearly beyond their power to overtake and retrieve the past. That a large amount of disorder, confusion, and uncertainty prevailed was shown by the inaccuracies and inconsistencies of the returns sent in to head-quarters. A thousand mules or bullocks more or less seemed to be a matter which no one at Zoula was able to account for; and there were many other points upon which it was impossible to get satisfactory information. It would be unjust to attribute this to the fault of any individual officer; only there is the more reason for insisting upon it, that every circumstance connected with the organization of the corps should be elucidated now that "the hurly-burly's done," in order that the mistakes and blunders which led to the complication might be avoided in future.

The Punjab richly deserves the thanks of the nation for the

loan of its mule train, with officers to work it so well as Captain Hand and his assistants did. When a requisition was made on the Transport department in the Highlands, there was no lifting up of hands to Heaven for help, nor wringing of them in mute despair, followed by protestations of inability to comply with the requisition, and adjurations to pity the sorrows of a Transport Train officer, as was sometimes the case at Zoula. If the indent bore the necessary signature, it was promptly and quietly complied with; and information required by the Commander-in-Chief on any point whatever could be supplied on the spot.

The health of the mules, unfortunately, was not all that could be desired, upwards of two thousand being on the sick list. Glanders and farcy had appeared among them at Koomaylee, to such an extent as to render Mr. Lamb's return to that depôt necessary; but latest reports afforded reason to hope that these diseases—the last stages of debility and starvation—might not assume the dimensions of an epidemic, but confine themselves to isolated attacks upon the most sapped and ruined constitutions. There were now in the train about 4,700 camels, 10,000 mules, 800 tattoes, over 4,000 pack bullocks, 540 draught bullocks, and forty-three elephants. Of these the elephants and 5,500 mules were on the highlands, a force amply sufficient, with the aid of country carriage, to supply the requirements of the depôts and brigades, so far as these requirements were at present felt, or could be foreseen.

It is due to the officers of the Lowland Train to quote here the following General Order, issued by His Excellency the Commander-in Chief, under date Antalo, March 4 :—

"The Commander-in-Chief has lately received from the Director Transport Train, Abyssinian Field Force, a full and particular report of the services rendered to the Corps by the different officers under his command. His Excellency has perused this report with much satisfaction, and it is most gratifying to him to find that, in spite of the numerous and extraordinary difficulties with which

the officers of the Transport Train have had to contend, and notwithstanding the hard and increasing work they have had to perform, they have, almost without exception, displayed an amount of steady determination to do their best, which is beyond all praise.

"The Commander-in-Chief begs to assure Major Warden, and the officers under his command, that the work performed by them has not been overlooked and shall not be forgotten. His Excellency trusts that one and all will remember that upon their individual exertions depends in a great measure the success of the Expedition.

"The Transport Train, for reasons far beyond the control of the officers belonging to it, has just commenced to assume that military organization so necessary to its well being, and for want of which it at first suffered so severely. It is, therefore, most essential that each officer should exert himself to the utmost to ensure a steady progress in this direction; and His Excellency feels assured that in a very short time the Corps will have attained that state of efficiency for which all interested in it have been so long striving.

"The Commander-in Chief is well aware how much the success of the officers of the Land Transport Train have been depreciated, and how unfairly blame has been attached to them for shortcomings beyond their control. His Excellency, however, assures them, that he has never for a moment lost confidence in them, nor has he ever doubted that their exertions would eventually bring order and regularity out of confusion and indiscipline.

"It must be remembered, however, that much hard work still remains to be done, and the officers of the Transport Train must be prepared to go through with it until the object of the Expedition has been attained. They must remember that their duty does not merely extend to the men and animals comprising their own division, but that it is absolutely necessary that a general interest should be felt in the working of the whole Train.

"When on the march they should be incessantly on the move along the whole line of convoy, so as to ensure the proper attention of the muleteers to the animals under their charge; increasing supervision on their part that can alone prevent neglect of orders amongst those under their command, and consequent injury to animals the value of which at the present moment can scarcely be too highly estimated. No point, however minute, which is likely to add to the comfort and efficiency of these animals, must therefore be overlooked, and

"His Excellency relies upon his orders upon these points being carried out in the spirit and the letter. All cannot of course work under the immediate eye of the Commander-in-Chief, and compa-

ratively few can accompany the Advance Force, but His Excellency will make no distinction when the campaign is over between those who were in front or those who were necessarily in rear.

"All by good work can contribute materially to the success of the campaign, and it will be by that standard alone that His Excellency will be guided when making hereafter his report upon the services performed by the officers under his command.

(By order)
"FRED. THESIGER, *Colonel*,
"*Deputy Adjutant General.*"

This order is one the spirit of which will be admired by every soldier or officer by whom it may be read. It is as inspiring as the address of a commander on the eve of a battle, and is still more noteworthy than a manifesto of that kind would be. On such occasions no stimulation is needed; but to grapple with the wearisome and depressing obstacles with which the officers and men of the Transport Train had to contend in those terrible Passes, there was required the inspiriting accents of a General so generous and considerate as Sir R. Napier is known to be.

And now that he could commend, he did it without stint. He tells the Director and the officers of the Transport Train that "the work done by them has not been overlooked, and shall not be forgotten," but he urges them to continued exertions, as if the success of the campaign depended upon the vigilance of each officer of the Train, and the exertions of every individual mule driver.

In such a magnificent climate as that of the Abyssinian highlands, the health of the troops could hardly have been otherwise than excellent. For a couple of hours or so in the morning the sun was a little hot, but not nearly so hot as at Matheran in its coolest mornings—Matheran, that lovely sanitarium of Western India, perched away up among those picturesque Ghauts which fringe the Malabar Coast, and woo the breezes from the Indian Ocean. About ten or eleven o'clock a fine breeze set in at Antalo from the

west, and continued to blow steadily—sometimes too steadily for the comfort of dwellers in tents—till towards evening.

And such evenings! My remembrances of them are unspeakably pleasant; how I shall always delight to recall that full moon shining in a cloudless sky, bathing in a perfect flood of light the scarped peaks which fringed the southern horizon, and giving the tented field in the foreground an enchanting and fairy-like appearance which it lost in the severe light of day, each bell tent at night resembling a little pyramid of snow. The nights were not cold, only deliciously cool, and such as one warmly clad could not but enjoy, especially if he could have a brew of something hot; and, in the unavoidable absence of Glenlivet, Bengal rum was by no means to be despised. If obvious precautions were neglected, dysentery and rheumatism might be the result; and these did occasionally make their appearance when not specially provided against. But the general health of the Force was excellent, and the spirits of the men left nothing to be desired.

Let the following figures, deduced from the returns submitted by the different regiments this morning, speak for themselves. Of the G-14th not a man was on the sick list; the A-21st presented an equally clean sheet, as also did the 10th Company of Royal Engineers; of the 4th King's Own, 2·7 per cent. were reported sick; of the 33rd Regiment, 4·4 per cent.; and of the 10th N. I., 5·5 per cent. The percentage among the mule drivers and public followers was necessarily greater, but could not be ascertained with any degree of accuracy owing to constant changes and fluctuations. It was, however, very small, and the cases in hospital were generally simple and easy of treatment and cure. It is needless to state, after this, that the climate of Abyssinia was grossly maligned before the campaign, for the mouths of the prophets of evil have long ago been stopped, and must for ever remain so.

Regiments on the march from Senafe or any other depôt on the highlands were ordered in future to carry fifteen days' provisions with them, that amount being amply sufficient to render them independent of Commissariat assistance *en route*. Goona-Goona, Mai Wuhiz, and other stations like them, would therefore have no Commissariat establishment, but only Senafe, Addigerat, Antalo, Lat, and Ashangi. Men were so much needed by the Department in the front, where something could be purchased, that it was a waste of strength to leave them at places where they could only buy an occasional bullock and a few pounds of grain. Both at Antalo and at Attala there was work for a score of inspectors and overseers, and the same was likely to be the case by and bye at the depôts which Lieutenant Shewell had gone on to form.

Supplies of almost every kind were daily received in such quantities at the Antalo depôt as to perplex the officers to know how to dispose of them in the meantime. The flour brought in did more than satisfy the requirements of the Force, and the huge pile of bags daily increased in dimensions. Yesterday's purchases of grain were nearly 1,500 lbs.; of flour, over 14,000 lbs.; of ghee, 130 lbs.; 1,000 loaves; of hay, 10,250 lbs.; 30 sheep and 6 bullocks. Among luxuries may be mentioned onions, red chillies, coffee, tobacco, honey, milk, butter, and last, but by no means least, that most refreshing and delightful beverage, *tej*.

It would be difficult to say exactly how many months' provisions there now were in the depôt, as the strength of the Force was constantly varying; but an idea may be formed from the following calculation for one thousand men, only it should be remembered that the stocks increased daily and weekly both from local purchases and from the arrival of convoys from Addigerat. There were at present, then, in the Commissariat yard, a month's biscuit for a thousand men, seventy days' rum, fifty-six days' tea, a

month's coffee, a month's sugar, three months' vegetables, nine months' flour, a fortnight's bread, five months' rice, besides large quantities of ghee, dhall, salt, and a small allotment of medical comforts. To assist in the calculation, I may state that the Magdala Force was at this date arranged to consist of two thousand Europeans, two thousand five hundred natives, and two thousand followers.

The telegraph was all but keeping pace with the Force. It was now open and in working order as far as Addigerat, and great things were being done in the way of collecting poles for its construction beyond. Lieutenant St. John reported that the Shohos and Abyssinians had quite desisted from cutting or injuring the wire, but that a new source of annoyance had arisen with which both diplomacy and force were alike unable to deal effectually. The baboons, with which the mountain sides swarmed, insisted upon having a "constitutional" upon the wire every morning and evening, performing their gymnastic capers with such vigour as to pull it down altogether. *Punch* accounted for the breaking of the Trans-Atlantic cable by suggesting that the playful mermaidens made a swinging rope of it; but the exhibitions of these hoary baboons upon the Abyssinian cable completely eclipsed the Charivari's cartoon, inasmuch as they were not only equally ludicrous and destructive, but perfectly real.

Of the position of the different regiments little need be said, except that they were taking up their posts as quickly as possible, in accordance with the distribution given in last chapter. The troops ahead were the 3rd and 4th Companies of Bombay Sappers, two companies of Pioneers, two companies of Beloochees, five companies of the 33rd Regiment, and the whole of the Sind Horse. The Headquarters and two companies of Beloochees arrived at Antalo on the morning of March 11th, as also did the forty-two elephants and the mortars. The 3rd Light Cavalry re-

mounts also came in, in good health and condition. The 4th King's Own, the A-21st battery Mountain Artillery, Light Cavalry, and Head-quarters 10th N. I. were to advance on to-morrow,—how far remained to be seen. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief and Staff, and Sir Charles Staveley and Staff, were also to proceed to the front.

The leading features of the epidemic which wrought such havoc among the cavalry and mules at Zoula have already been noticed; but the following report to the Adjutant General, Abyssinian Expeditionary Force, submitted by Mr. Hallen, Staff Veterinary Surgeon, necessarily gives a fuller and more detailed account of both diagnosis and treatment, and will therefore be valuable to general as well as scientific readers :—

"SIR,—I have the honour to report for the information of H. E. Sir Robert Napier, K.C.B., &c., my opinion regarding the epizootic which has attacked so many of the horses and mules of this force.

"The Danakil equine typhus fever is a disease of the epizootic class, at all seasons prevailing on the eastern coasts of Africa, in the Danakil country, and from the coast generally to the Highlands. It assumes its most malignant form after the rains, which periodically fall, generally in the months of January, February, June and July. The equine race is most subject to this fever; but it is said that cattle and camels are also attacked with a disease similar to, if not identical with it.

"The fever is of a typhus type, at times associated with a highly depressed state of the nervous system, at times of very malignant form and rapid course; at other times of a comparatively mild and protracted course. The circulatory system or lungs are the parts generally involved during the progress of the disease, and in some cases the stomach is found more or less affected. It is contagious; but not so contagious as might be expected among the horses and mules of this army, as they are, of course, kept in the open; but probably the disease would be highly infectious amongst horses and mules in a confined atmosphere. The period of incubation is from a few hours to twelve or fourteen days.

"The causes may be classed under the head—exciting and predisposing. The exciting cause doubtless rests with some particular

state of the atmosphere in the localities where the disease prevails. It does not seem to be dependent on impure water, or bad forage, as animals solely fed on condensed water, and the best imported forage have become affected with the malady, and when contagion could not have been the cause of the disease. The predisposing causes may be considered over-exertion, insufficient diet, bad forage, and impure water.

"The symptoms by which the disease may be recognised may be of intense or comparatively mild form, according to the intensity of the attack. When the disease assumes a malignant form, great depression of the vital powers rapidly occurs; the patient may be found trembling, showing more or less symptoms of stupor, the eyes half-closed, head pendant, respiration accelerated, the mouth, eyes, throat, and glands in the region of the throat and jaws swelled, mucous membranes highly congested and of a dark hue, petechial spots on gums of a very dark colour, with more or less yellowish tint; the tongue is also enlarged and coated, mouth dry, and breath offensive: pulse very feeble, and quick, frequently hardly perceptible; the circulation of the blood seems to be all but stopped; at the submaxillary artery the current is, in severe cases, not to be felt; effusion of serum and bloody tissue in areolar tissue of swelled parts; cough, and generally cough of a marked kind; when cough is present, the patient does not lie down, or only lies a short time; sometimes no cough, and in such cases the pulse will be found not only very feeble, but irregular and intermittent, significant of cardiac disorder. Great difficulty is experienced in swallowing, and in severe cases is attended with symptoms of choking; when this is the case, signs of the lungs having become involved are more speedily evinced, even to the threatening of asphyxia. Nasal discharge thick and sometimes bloody, in the latter stages frothy; bowels occasionally constipated, and fœces coated with bloody mucus; urine scanty and of a high colour. Fever continued.

"As the disease advances, the above symptoms become more urgent, and soon evince whether the throat, wind-pipe, bronchiæ and lungs are, or whether the heart is, chiefly affected. In some few cases the symptoms are those associated with disordered stomach. These symptoms continue from one hour to several days, according to the intensity of attack. Relapse occasionally occurs from ten days to three weeks after the first recovery. Cases of relapse seldom recover.

"The treatment consists in the administration of diffusible stimulants, such as spirits of nitrous ether, carbonate of ammonia, or, when these are not to be obtained, brandy or rum in frequent doses; also of camphor and nitre twice a day; mustard embrocations or stimulants of cantharides should be applied to the sides when pneumonic symptoms predominate, and a stimulant over the left side when cardiac symptoms prevail. When febrile symptoms abate, quinine, in one or two drachm doses, with stimulants of ether or brandy, may be given morning and evening. Enemata of warm water if the bowels be constipated; warm clothing with bandages at night whenever the climate is cold at night. The diet consists of gruel, green grass, and boiled grain, and a small quantity of common salt should be given in all food and drink. The patient should be kept as quiet as possible, well sheltered from the sun by day, and from the cold by night. Exercise should be forbidden; in cases where exercise had been unwisely given, the patient has suddenly fallen down and died.

"The treatment above recommended I have found successful in most cases I have had to treat; but I must note that the cases I have had under treatment have been in the Highlands where the disease generally assumes a comparatively mild form; and cases have occurred generally in from twelve to fourteen days after the arrival of the horses from the Lowlands and passes up to the Highlands, the districts (Lowlands) in which the disease itself or the seeds of the disease are contracted, and where it occurs in a more malignant form.

"The post mortem appearances will of course depend on what particular organs are affected during life. In cases where cardiac symptoms have predominated, the pericardium will be found so distended with serum of a yellow or bloody colour, that the serum will spurt out some feet on the sac being punctured. The heart itself is found very soft in texture and dark in colour, and with very slight pressure the finger is easily pushed through its structure. The pericardium is covered more or less with petachia, and these are found to be more abundant on the endocardium, especially at the roots of the bicuspid and tricuspid valves, and elevated portions of the ventricles; and between the valves and walls of the heart more or less yellow fibrinous clots are collected. The blood in the heart and circulatory system generally is semi-coagulated, and more or less resembling treacle.

"When the disease has chiefly affected the lungs, these organs are found more or less hepatized. In cases that have been of very rapid course, the hepatization consists of the escape of blood into the substance of the lungs: in those that have been of comparatively protracted course, the hepatization is of a more usual kind, and clots of yellow fibrinous deposit may be observed throughout the structure of the lungs leading to an appearance somewhat like grey hepatization, but the deposits are soft and yielding, not hard and compact as in true grey hepatization. The trachea, bronchiæ, and air cells are full of mucus effusion, and, from the admixture of air, seem choked with frothy mucus. The mucus membranes throughout the aerial passages show patechiæ in abundance, especially well marked and very dark in the neighbourhood of the epiglottis and ridges of larynx. In some cases the villous coat of the stomach is found of a dark red or even purple colour; in one case a portion of it was all but black, an appearance that might be mistaken for the effects of irritant poisoning. In a few cases where great difficulty of deglutition had been observed during life, and symptoms of choking occurred, the æsophagus was found impacted with food, and in two instances some portions of food were found in the trachea and bronchia.

"In conclusion, I would beg to state that although the losses from the disease were at first considerable, since the horses have not been kept at Zoula or the Lowlands, but sent up by usual marches through the Sooroo Pass to Senafe, very few horses have been attacked, and those that have become affected, have had the disease in a mild form, only one or two deaths having occurred. Indeed I believe that horses may now be imported to Zoula, and sent to Senafe during the dry season without losing more than one or two per cent. from the disease. Of the 454 horses of the 3rd Sind Horse, so brought from Zoula to Senafe, not one horse became affected.

"I have called upon Veterinary Surgeon Jones, who was in charge of the horses of the 3rd Light Cavalry during the time when the disease raged most malignantly among them, to furnish a report which, on receiving, I shall have the honour to forward to you.—I have, &c.,

"J. H. B. HALLEN.

"Antalo, March 3."

CHAPTER XIII.

MUKHAN, *March 17th.*

After the remarks in the preceding chapter regarding the road beyond Antalo were written, circumstances transpired of such a nature as to cause no small amount of indignation and disgust in camp, and to call forth language more expressive than parliamentary from all quarters. It now appeared that all the time and labour expended in making the road between Musgee and Attala had been spent for nought. Between four and five hundred men had been labouring hard for ten days upon that piece of road, which it would yet require ten days more to render practical in any shape whatever, and all their labour had to go for nothing! Of course, nobody was to blame.

The gravest reflections were made upon Colonel Phayre, who, it was contended, ought to have ascertained before now that another route, which presented no obstacles worth speaking of, branched off from Musgee, and led to Attala in an almost parallel direction to that in which the Pioneers had been toiling for these ten days. It would, however, be unfair to attach serious blame to Colonel Phayre in this matter, or, speaking seriously, to any other officer.

I shall, therefore, give a plain statement of the facts of the case, and allow each to 'hang' whomsoever he considers deserving of that conventional punishment. When the Pioneer force arrived at Antalo, immediate measures were taken to collect reliable information concerning the road and country beyond. A letter was despatched by General Merewether to one Wulda Yessoos, whose name has been mentioned before in no very creditable connexion, and who is one of the grandees of that part of Abyssinia. This man, who had professed himself friendly, was requested to send in a guide who could describe the country and

routes, and who could, from personal knowledge, inform the officers of the Advance party as to the difficulties and supplies likely to be met with in each.

In due time a guide came, brimful of advice and cunning in argument. He represented that there were three roads to Attala, one through the territory of the Asumo Gallas, another by way of Musnoo, and a third by way of Amba Alaji, the fort and residence of Wulda Yessoos. Of these the first was stated to be unquestionably the best, the second the next best, and the third utterly out of the question, by reason of gorges, precipices, and mountains in the way. The first, General Merewether firmly declined, knowing what sort of people the Gallas were, and as the route lay too far to the eastward; and the consequence was that Colonel Phayre and he were led to adopt the second, which the man declared was by no means difficult, in comparison to the third.

Now it appears that the reverse of this was exactly the case; only Wulda Yessoos was desirous that we should go by the Gallas route, as we should in all probability come into collision with and demolish a sworn foe of his; failing that, he preferred that we should go by the Musnoo route, as it lay at some distance from his amba, which we might perhaps attack in passing, being on very friendly terms with Kassa, whose rebellious subject and relative he was. So the faithful guide came posted, and the Intelligence and Quarter-Master General's departments were sold a horrible bargain.

The unassuming but withal shrewd M. Munzinger was the means of discovering the deceit that had been practised upon us on his way to Wakshum Gobazye. Curiosity prompted him to take the so-called difficult route from Musgee, and finding that it presented comparatively few difficulties, he immediately reported the circumstance to General Merewether, who lost no time in communicating

with Colonel Phayre. The troops were immediately recalled from beyond Musnoo to commence operations afresh on the Amba Alaji road, by which the Force marched from Antalo on the 12th of March without serious let or hindrance.

It is impossible to convey any idea of the annoyance caused by this utter waste of labour and of nearly a fortnight of precious time, all through the wilful deception practised upon us by a pretended friend. One would have thought that everybody would have known ere now that the Abyssinians are the most inveterate liars in the world, and would have taken care to verify, in some degree at least, the information they gave. But this was not done; and hence the mess.

While Colonel Phayre was not considered to be altogether accountable for the blunder, the question was constantly and reasonably put, why he did not avail himself of the assistance of other officers of his department? There were several excellent surveyors at Antalo whose services could well have been spared to avoid such mistakes, and who, as Colonel Phayre well knew, would willingly have undertaken the duty. Why, it was asked, should one man, for the sake of having all the credit of the pioneer work to himself, even run the risk of being grievously misled and of sacrificing important public interests, by refusing to share that work with another equally well qualified? Both roads ought to have been carefully surveyed, every mile of them; and it was now strongly felt that the happy-go-lucky style of doing things which had so interfered with the progress of the expedition, must cease at once, else greater mishaps and calamities would assuredly overtake us. Colonel Phayre had most unquestionably been working steadily and well, but had he availed himself of additional assistance which could easily have been obtained, it is only reasonable to suppose that many complaints which were justly made

regarding the manner in which some of the works had been done, would never have been heard. *Ne humeri suscipiant plus quam sustinere valent.*

The *locale* of the Head-quarters of the Field Force on March 17 may most easily be described as having been ten miles north of Lake Ashangi. Within the past week a variety of circumstances had combined to accelerate the movements of the Commander-in-Chief; and if the rate of speed which had been attained during the last few days could be kept up, it was clear that part of the Force would be in Magdala in less than a month's time. In the first place Sir Robert Napier could hitherto never calculate upon receiving reliable intelligence regarding the country and roads, so he determined to go on and see everything for himself, instead of attempting to form correct impressions from imperfect and contradictory reports. The uncertainty which prevailed at Antalo regarding the amount of work necessary to be done before the first brigade could advance, the time it would require to execute it, and indeed the advisability of proceeding with it at all, was not only irritating, but ruinous in the last degree; consequently His Excellency was driven to the conclusion that, in order to economise time, labour, and money as much as possible, he must undertake reconnoitring and pioneer work himself, and issue daily instructions for the guidance of working parties.

This determination on the part of the Commander-in-Chief could not but be regarded as conveying the very strongest reflection on the manner in which certain officers had performed their duty hitherto; but it was not adopted a day too soon. No fear could now be entertained lest the Pioneer Force should waste weeks upon roads which might after all be found to be impracticable, or err in the opposite direction by devoting too little attention to places attended with real difficulty or danger.

Anomalous, therefore, as it may seem, the Pioneer Force made the road after a large part of the army had passed; indeed it may almost be said to have followed the first brigade. The gigantic blunder which came to light at Antalo was the immediate cause of this change in the conduct of the campaign. It was then evident that immediate measures were necessary to prevent a recurrence of such a blunder; and without loss of time, Sir Robert proceeded to Musgee, on the 12th instant. Thus far the road was good and comparatively level, but beyond this there was no road at all. The Pioneer Force, under Brigadier General Field, had just returned from their mad tilt against the hills and precipices around Musnoo, and was to set to work on the more westerly and less difficult road on the morrow. But there was no time to wait for improvements being effected, and the column which accompanied the Head-quarters advanced before a spade had been used, or a single stone removed.

In order to get a day's march in advance of the column, the Commander-in-Chief and Staff did not halt at Meshak, the first camp beyond Musgee, but proceeded at once to Attala. For a few miles the native track, though stony and rough, presented no difficulties which a lightly loaded mule might not surmount with ease. But by and bye, affairs assumed quite a different complexion; a narrow ravine was entered, in the bottom of which flowed a fine stream, with a strip of promising barley on either side; the track, which was literally causewayed with smooth slippery boulders, was only about three feet wide, and in some places not more than one and a half: it was bounded on the right by precipices twenty or thirty feet deep, and on the left by the perpendicular mountain side. In many places the conviction forced itself upon one that his horse was far more likely to miss his footing than not, and that the consequences of the slip could hardly be other than serious—a feeling

which does not always tend to steady one's nerves or limbs. The wonder therefore was, not that one or two of the baggage animals should have come to grief, but that fifty per cent. of them should not have been equally unfortunate. Of course there were miraculous escapes. A sowar of the 3rd Light Cavalry and his horse were both precipitated over a cliff thirty feet high, and sustained no injury.

Had the road been less dangerous and difficult, a more lovely ride than that through this ravine could hardly be conceived; it was far more grand and picturesque than that up the Rarayguddy Pass. The rugged and barren mountain sides contrasted strongly with the fertility of the narrow strip of valley below, while the stream to which the track descended every two hundred yards or so, was almost completely hidden from view by the gigantic willow trees which grew thickly upon its banks, and which afforded a grateful shade to the traveller, whose eye soon tired of the dazzling limestone and sandstone rock above.

Though Meshak was an extremely pleasant spot, well-sheltered and well-watered, it had no supplies of grass or grain, and was consequently more often passed by than occupied, even for a night. So exceedingly steep was the ghaut beyond this, that more than one thousand men had to be set to work upon it before the column could ascend, and after all, the ascent of three miles generally occupied three or four hours, and caused the complete breakdown of many mules. Towering above the top of the ghaut might be seen the famous Amba Alaji, the stronghold of the rebel Wulda Yessoos. A more inaccessible place it would be impossible to conceive; no way of access to it was visible, and the scarped rocks all round the summit protected the huts of the soldiers from shot and shell, while they afforded every facility for hurling down stones and other missiles upon an invader.

The descent of this ghaut was even more tedious than

the ascent; stoppages from loads falling off were constant; stones of all sizes, set in motion by some stumbling mule, came shooting down the side with tremendous velocity, and no small amount of acrobatic skill and power was required to avoid the avalanche.

On reaching the plain, in which Attala camp was situated, and looking back upon the Amba Alaji ghaut, it was almost impossible to believe that men and mules had descended its apparently perpendicular sides in safety; and beyond, at a distance of a few hundred yards to the southward, the towering Debra Moosa, over which next day's march led, seemed like a wall of solid stone, three thousand feet high.

The march from Attala to Mukhan was by far the severest we had yet experienced. The intervening country consisted exclusively of three ranges of lofty and precipitous hills, with a narrow strip of valley between; and seeing that the smallest possible amount of work had been expended on the road, the column merely halting for half an hour to roll aside a few rocks—the ascent and descent of these hills represented so much scrambling rather than marching. Following close upon the trying march from Meshak to Attala, the fatigue of yesterday proved too much for many of the mules, which sank in numbers on the road. I saw at least half-a-dozen dead or dying, and ten times that number must have been unfitted for further effective service. Of the seven hundred mules which left Attala at six o'clock on the Monday morning, the majority arrived after six o'clock at night; many after eight, and some were dropping in even at mid-day on Tuesday.

But for the exhausted condition of the baggage animals no halt would have been made at Mukhan. But now that road-making was all but suspended, it was to be expected that delays on account of the baggage animals would be absolutely necessary, as no train in the world could hold out for a week against the killing work and

irregular feeding of the past three days. The Force was now not far from that stage, however, where all carriage would be disallowed, except so much as might be required to carry provisions for the troops on the march. The advance column would, it was hoped and believed, be made to bivouac beyond Lat, the tents being brought on at leisure if required. The camps at Musgee, Meshak, Attala, and Mukhan were respectively eight, twelve, and twenty miles apart, and were all situated in well-watered valleys. Every valley in this part of Abyssinia has its stream. It will be seen from the foregoing that Sir Robert Napier had now attained the highest rate of speed which would be practicable or desirable, till the finish.

News had now been received of Theodore's having left Dalanta, and continued his march towards Magdala, where he was expected to arrive about the 24th of this month (March). The object in view now was, to overtake His Majesty if possible, and if not, to prevent his leaving Magdala. For this a portion of the Force would be sufficient, so His Excellency resolved to push on with the column now with him, Sir Charles Staveley following a day's march behind with another, and General Schneider bringing on the remainder of his brigade as rapidly as possible. A few days would suffice to concentrate these Forces, if concentration were considered necessary.

As the elephants and guns of the G-14th R. A. might not be able to keep pace with the cavalry, infantry, and Mountain Gun batteries, no attempt was made to retain them with the Advance Brigade; they were allowed to follow up as arrangements could be made for them. As being more mobile, the Rocket Battery and Naval Brigade, and the B-21st R. A. (Mountain Train) were transferred to the First Brigade, and ordered to the front with *all* haste.

Considerable doubt existed as to whether Sir Robert would be able to carry out his present intention in its

integrity; but he evidently meant to have the Pioneer Force and the First Brigade under the walls of Magdala by the first week of April, where the arrival of the heavier munitions of war could be awaited if necessary. And he was adopting the surest way of effecting this, by doing almost everything for himself; every move that was made, every plan that was adopted, and every resolution and order that were promulgated were Sir Robert's own, and were a part of that great plan to which he had adhered so closely and so wisely hitherto, and which he was working out so vigorously and so successfully. The plan of the Expedition had been all his own, and the working out of it would be his own too.

CHAPTER XIV.

MUSSAGEETA, *March 21st.*

The Head-quarters and Pioneer Force had, during the past four days, passed through twenty and odd miles of the most beautiful country we had yet seen in Abyssinia, and were now about to enter the most dreary and uninteresting tract between Senafe and Magdala. The dreariness of Lasta and Dalanta would, however, be amply compensated for by the increasing excitement connected with the campaign, for we were now only two hours' ride by railway from Magdala, and not a day that passed but brought with it something or other to remind us that we were really in an enemy's country, and rapidly drawing near to the theatre where the *grand tableau* was to be enacted—facts which it had hitherto been difficult to realize.

Sir Robert Napier and the Pioneer Force left Mukhan on the 18th instant for Ashangi, whither the Head-quarter wing of the 33rd Regiment had gone on the preceding day,

in order to remove any obstacles likely to interfere seriously with the progress of the baggage train.

The route, as a reference to any good map will show, lay across the Ashangi hills, the highest elevation of which is about 10,500 feet above the sea. M. Munzinger, who ought by this time to have been a fair judge of roads, had reported the march to be a difficult one, in some places even worse than Sooroo ever was; but, so far as I am aware, that gentleman's experiences of it coincided with those of no one else. Many miles were difficult, and but few easy; yet the mules jogged along wonderfully, and reached Ashangi about the middle of the afternoon without betraying any great symptoms of fatigue.

The beauty of the country consisted, as most will suppose, in its countless mountain peaks, not bare and rocky as those of Adowa were, but clothed to the very summit with luxuriant vegetation—gigantic junipers, each as straight as an arrow, trees of heather *(erica arborea)* in full and profuse bloom, St. John's wort all a blaze of yellow, myrtles, acacias, and varieties of sweet pea; in the multitude and depth of its valleys, so deep that the trees below seemed as a mere carpeting of green; and in the cool pellucid streams which flowed here and there from rocky caverns in the mountain sides, forming many a lovely little waterfall as they meandered down the rugged and precipitous slopes. Expressions of admiration might be heard on all sides, some comparing the landscape to the most picturesque parts of Switzerland, and others, to the glens and 'Bens' of their own well-remembered Trosachs.

After scrambling up two or three mountain sides, halting oft to breathe and to enjoy the wondrous scenery around, the summit of the highest range was reached at noon, whence the first glimpse could be caught of Lake Ashangi, lying cradled among hills some six miles below. The prospect on all sides was indeed grand. Behind lay, in

magnificent confusion, the Ashangi peaks, among which we had been wandering all the morning; in the distant background were the grey hills of Enderta; to the south-east lay the Adal country, where three distinct ranges of hills, each higher than that immediately before it, might be described; immediately below was the lake, and the silent land of Doba; and away to the southward the country towards which, though bleak and uninviting, all our wishes tended.

After descending from the mountain, an undertaking of some difficulty, the route lay through splendid fields of wheat and barley, along an alluvial plain which has doubtless at one time formed part of the lake, but which Vulcan, not yet asleep in these parts, has raised to its present elevation, or confined the waters within more narrow limits than they occupied a few years ago. Indeed the lake is represented in the maps as being much larger than it really is, leading one to suppose that when it was first mapped, it covered the fifteen hundred acres which are now fields of waving barley and grass, and that no later traveller has thought it worth while to reduce the water-line to its proper dimensions. Eight square miles—four miles long by two broad—represent, I should say, the superficial area of the lake.

Upon the brow of the hills, at its northern extremity, are several groups of villages, the population of which is entirely Mahomedan, as also is the people among whom we now were. In former times the population on the borders of the lake was Christian. But their cultivated fields and well-stocked farm-yards proved a stronger temptation than the plundering and powerful Gallas could resist; and *inroad* after inroad was made, till the Moslem was left for a time in undisputed possession of the district.

There is a romantic story told regarding this, which I may here relate. "The Silent Land" seems to remain a sort of debateable ground between the Christian and the

Infidel; its churches and temples are deserted and in ruins; yet there, the legend says, may be heard on each recurring sabbath morn the sound of bells calling the congregations to prayer, while from the ruined fanes are wafted the sounds of the ancient chant and ritual. This reminds one of the story told by Stephens regarding Central America—how in underground habitations among the hills, far below "the world's tempest and its moan," may be heard each morning the crowing of cocks and the sounds of busy but invisible life.

Many parts of the shore of the lake are exceedingly dangerous; often one steps from solid ground into a perfect bog, in which every attempt to escape only makes the situation worse. One or two officers, intent upon bringing down the geese and ducks which were there in such abundance, had more narrow escapes than they were afterwards willing to admit. It is said that a body of three hundred Galla horsemen, having been repulsed near Ashangi a few weeks before, fled precipitately towards the lake, and having rushed unawares upon one of these treacherous quagmires, disappeared at once and for ever. This may not be strictly true as to number, but it shows how wary they ought to be who follow *la chasse* on the winding shore of Ashangi. Narrow escapes and Abyssinian stories did not, unfortunately, form the only ground upon which the shore of the lake was believed to be treacherous. A poor dhoolie-wallah, intent on capturing a wounded goose, incautiously got upon the soft mud, and sank before assistance could be rendered him.

Grain, bullocks, grass, and wood were abundant in the neighbourhood; but prices increased rapidly as we advanced southward. The fame of the English and of their Austrian coin had preceded them.

Abundance of excellent grazing led to a day's halt being made at Ashangi; on the 20th the march was continued to

Mussageeta, a plain about a mile and a half beyond the southern extremity of the lake, in the district of Wofela. A day's halt was also made there, in order to allow the Sappers, Pioneers, and 33rd Regiment to examine and improve the track beyond. According to the present arrangement, which was working admirably, the Pioneer Force prepared the track for mules as it went on; Sir Charles Staveley's column followed a day's march behind, making it practicable for the elephants.

On the 22nd of March, the Commander-in-Chief was to march on Lat,—the road leading across the Daffat mountains, at the base of which the Mussageeta camp was situated. Everything continued to favour and facilitate the rapid move that had been made since Antalo was left, and which, contrary to the vaticinations of many, seemed certain to be practicable till the end. It was thought to be just possible that a short stay—a couple of days perhaps—might be made at a large village two stages beyond Lat; in order to allow the guns, cavalry, &c. to concentrate, in order to take breath, as it were, and brace their energies for the finish.

About thirty or forty miles from Magdala is a place called Cosso Amba, there, if not sooner, the grand rush was expected to commence, all tents, baggage and servants being left behind, and all mules not required for the conveyance of such Commissariat supplies as might be considered absolutely necessary. Everything depended, of course, upon the information His Excellency might obtain a few days hence; but at present Cosso Amba was marked as the point where everything that could be left should be left, and where our present rate of speed should be redoubled. The object and wisdom of this were equally apparent. Theodore's entry into Magdala must now be regarded as a *fait accompli;* his intentions were as much hidden as they had ever been, yet it was certain that the

sooner the Force reached Magdala the better, as its presence there would not only prevent His Majesty's escape, but would likewise leave him no time to organize measures for harassing and annoying the column on the march—a step which a savage with less shrewdness than Theodore had often showed himself possessed of, would most undoubtedly adopt, if he had time and opportunity to do so.

Hitherto it might not have been advisable to attack Theodore, or to drive him to extremities; for, though the Magdala captives might have been rescued, the Europeans in his camp would in all probability have been made the victims of his soldiers' fury, if not put to death at his own command. But having Theodorus and the Europeans safe in Magdala, with all hope of escape cut off, there was reason to believe that the whole would be recovered in safety.

In order to invest Magdala as effectually as possible, in the event of its investment being necessary, additional troops were ordered to the front. The 45th Foot, the 3rd Bombay Infantry, and another battery of Artillery were added to the Magdala Force, and were already coming up by forced marches. This was an unlooked-for piece of luck for those regiments, which, having arrived so recently, could hardly themselves have expected to form part of the Advance Force. Of all the European regiments in Abyssinia the 33rd was that which had borne the burden and heat of the day.

Considering what the escape of Theodorus from Magdala, taking, as he would certainly do, the most valuable of the captives with him, and the facility with which a regiment or two might now be moved up, there can be no question that Sir Robert Napier was right in making as sure as possible of his quarry. Did not the Ranee of Jhansi escape, notwithstanding the vigilance of a large force well acquainted with the place? And was Theodorus a less slippery cus-

tomer than she was, or less likely to turn our ignorance of Magdala and its vicinity to the best account?

Two instalments of news had been received from Magdala during the past week, dated respectively the 3rd and 15th March, but they contained no news of any importance. M. Munzinger, who, on the 13th, was with the army of Wakshum Gobazye, encamped within sight of the mountains around Magdala, had now to be looked to for latest and most reliable intelligence.

Theodorus had, when the Magdala letters were written, succeeded in conveying his guns and baggage across the Beshilo river, to within five miles of Magdala. He had excited the smouldering anger of the Dalanta people by plundering that district wholesale, the grain and other produce of which he was sending to Magdala. Several of the European workmen, who, it will remembered, were compelled to work on the roads, had fallen under his suspicion, and were again placed in irons; in fact, all the captives, without exception, were watched and guarded much more closely than ever.

The King openly spoke of the coming of the British even in the hearing of his army; but his plans remained impenetrable as hitherto. A general impression prevailed throughout the country that he would fight, and this impression was shared by nine-tenths of the Advance Force at least.

As reference has been made to M. Munzinger's mission to Wakshum Gobazye, and to the fact that the Force was now almost entirely dependent on him for information, it may not be uninteresting to give a short precis of his journal from the time of his leaving Antalo to his arrival at Cosso Amba, on the heights of Dalanta. M. Munzinger, after crossing the Taccazze river, which he found quite shallow, reached Cosso Amba on the 13th instant. Magdala itself could not be seen from where he was, but

the high line of the Wullo hills which surround it was plainly visible. Theodorus had at that date crossed the Beshilo river, and was encamped about five miles from Magdala, whither he was sending his guns and baggage with all possible despatch. The Mahommedan Wullo Galla tribes had assembled in numbers in his neighbourhood, but all they had attempted against him was to kill stragglers, and plunder when they could do so safely.

The junction of the King with the Magdala prisoners was reported by M. Munzinger to be an accomplished fact. Wakshum Gobazye had not yet returned from Begemeder, but he was represented at Cosso Amba by the Dejaz Mechecha, who met our envoy at the river Taccazze, received him with the greatest kindness, and furnished him with a lodging in his own house. The Dejaz had with him an army of some hundred cavalry, whose numbers were every day increasing. When M. Munzinger joined him, he was closing upon Theodore's rear, and invited him to accompany him, which he did, notwithstanding his conviction that the Dejaz was only imitating his master's sole military manœuvre, of watching the enemy's movements, and that a rapid retreat would be made the moment Theodore showed the slightest intention of turning back. Theodore's old prestige still clung to him. Some said the guns he had with him were the secret of this prestige; but M. Munzinger suspected that these were merely put forward as a pretext by those afraid, under any circumstances, to attack him.

A letter had been despatched to Wakshum by M. Munzinger, announcing his arrival, and suggesting that the prince should return to Lasta to meet the British Army. It seems that the near prospect of the arrival of the Force had caused unfeigned delight among the people of Lasta, whither runaways from Theodore's army now took refuge. Three Dalanta chiefs had arrived there fresh from His

Majesty's camp, having deserted on seeing their relations in fetters.

One of the chiefs of the Azubo Gallas, to whom a friendly letter had been despatched from Senafe, a copy of which I shall give by and bye, joined M. Munzinger as he passed through his country, brought a letter of welcome to Sir Robert Napier, assuring him that the Gallas were everywhere ready to welcome him, and that the chiefs had enjoined their people by proclamation to bring in supplies for the Army. That they would do so, there was not the slightest reason to doubt, as their professions were now being put to the test, and standing it admirably.

Several durbars had lately been held by the Commander-in-Chief, two of which deserve more than a mere passing notice;—not that the *tamashas* may be described, but that some account may be given of the chiefs whose reception they were intended to honour, and of the business transacted thereat.

One was held at Attala for the reception of Wulda Yessoos, (which, being interpreted, means Son of Jesus,) the rebel chief who holds the almost impregnable amba on the top of the Alaji ghaut, and the same gentleman who led Colonel Phayre such a dance over the road from Musgee to Attala, *via* Musnoo. Wulda Yessoos holds sway over a district well termed by Sir Robert Napier, "the Belgium of Abyssinia;" for, situated between two powerful neighbours, Kassa of Tigre and Wakshum Gobazye of Lasta, he must have a hard time of it to decide which is better able to protect and assist him against the other. He was formerly a partisan of Theodore's; but when Kassa rebelled and declared himself the subject of Gobazye, Wulda Yessoos gave him his moral support.

Now, however, that Kassa had declared himself independent ruler of Tigre, the situation was changed, and Wulda refused to countenance his former liege-lord, whose brother

he had killed a few years ago—hence a blood feud between them. But Gobazye had married a sister of Kassa's, and Wulda, having been unfortunate in his matrimonial relations already, had no wish to try the dice another time, so he could not strengthen his position as Gobazye had done; and should the two rivals and relatives affect a reconciliation, it might fare ill with Wulda notwithstanding his trimming. He had no excuse to offer for the deception he practised on the Pioneer Force, except that he meant no offence, but thought it would be better that the road between Antalo and his amba should remain as formidable as possible.

This man is a finely-featured, shrewd, and unscrupulous Abyssinian, who with a little more constancy and resolution might ere now have occupied the position that Kassa holds. But, effeminate and timid as Kassa seemed at Mai Deeyab, he has evidently more firmness and oneness of purpose than any of the chiefs over whom he claims sway; hence, in a great measure, his power. Wudda Yessoos came prepared, by every device he could think of, to gain by British remonstrance or interference what he evidently lacked courage, if not ability, to hold for himself; and while he was worsted on all sides by Sir Robert Napier, he was assured by His Excellency that Kassa would not attack him so long as we are in the country—indeed Kassa at His Excellency's request had relinquished his long cherished intention of doing so this spring, that he might thereby prove his desire to do everything which Sir Robert wished him to do. The glibness with which Wulda Yessoos advanced statements and opinions in one breath, flatly contradicted himself in the next, all "to please the Sooltan," and the delight with which he received the presents given him, at the same time suggesting the appropriateness of something else being given as well—a telescope "for the keeper of a *hill fort*," and a

little brandy "for his stomach's sake"—were extremely amusing, as also was his mortal dread of Theodore's notorious gun.

It may be remarked in conclusion that Sir Robert Napier hoped, when the object of the campaign should have been satisfactorily accomplished, to have been able, by friendly advice, to effect a reconciliation between these rival chiefs, and a peaceful adjustment of their claims.

The other durbar to which a few lines may be devoted was held at Ashangi, and was of far greater importance than the preceding. In the end of January last, Sir Robert Napier caused the following letter to be addressed from Senafe to the chiefs and holy men of the Wullo Gallas of Dalanta and Daunt :—

"We write to tell you that the army of England is "coming to rescue the British subjects unjustifiably held in "captivity by Theodorus, and to resent the insult offered "by Theodorus to the Queen of England.

"The General commanding the army, Sir Robert Napier, "has only friendly feelings towards the chiefs and people of "Abyssinia, who, he knows, are friendly inclined towards "him and his army.

"Any assistance, therefore, that you render in the "accomplishment of the object for which he has entered "the country will gain his favour and be amply rewarded. "He is coming quickly with his army. Any opposition "you can offer to Theodorus' advance will be most satis-"factory to him and command his warm approval.

"We send a copy of his Proclamation, which will be "strictly adhered to."

This letter having been received by a man with the unpronounceable and almost unspellable name of Al Fakeer Fakeeah Muhammad al Anneeah, who may best be described as being the Akoond of Swat among the Wullo Gallas, drew forth the following reply, "written from the

"district of Hajra and the Shaikh's own mosque of "Anneeah, to General Merewether and the chiefs of the "army of England :—

"Praise be to the one God, who inspired the Old "Testament and the New, and the writings of Moses "and the Koran. Praise and glory to the one Intercessor "for high and low, learned and ignorant—our Lord "Muhammad, on whom be blessings and peace.

"Your letter has been received by me, and by the chiefs "to whom it is addressed, and has caused to me and all "exceeding joy. The great men of this country will come "to you with gifts. My offering is a prayer for your "victory in this life and the next. It is our custom, when "in a strange country, to be on our guard. You are "foreigners in this country ; therefore, be wary till your "object be gained. I cannot come to you ; I have written "to you instead ; and with my letter I have sent my own "son, and my favourite disciple. I hope they may be "received kindly ; they are learned in the faiths alike of "our Lord Muhammad, and of Jesus Christ, and of "Moses.

"Kings govern mankind ; but the sage is the ruler of "kings. Do not forget me ; and keep writing to me. I "shall keep praying for you. I wrote to the Moslem "chiefs of Haiaband, who are enemies of Theodore's, and "advised them to make common cause with you on your "approach. Communicate you with them. Day and "night be vigilant. Sleep not till success is yours. I "hear that Theodore boasts to his army that he will "destroy you.

"The people of this country are ignorant of the true "way. They might even write to you in my name. This "is the only letter I have ever written. If any one "brings you a letter, and says it is from me, believe it "not, unless it is delivered to you by the bearer of this."

I have given the translation of the letter *in extenso*, omitting a hymn (which being written in Arabic, had not been fully translated), not that I consider it an important State document, but as I think it will assist greatly to the forming of a correct idea of the sort of man who wrote it, and of the men who brought it—a bigoted, simple, and earnest people, true friends if well managed, but implacable foes if offended.

The letter was first read in its original Arabic by their co-religionist Meer Akbar Allee, and then the translation, by Captain Tweedie, His Excellency's Political Secretary. After this a little conversation took place, during which Sir Robert called their attention to the fact that the English had soldiers of all creeds and beliefs, who trusted them and were trusted by them, and who rejoiced to cast in their fortune with them. In testimony to the truth of this statement, the magnificent native officers of the Sind Horse and Beloochees, bedecked with their well-won ribands and medals, ornamented one side of the durbar tent. The appearance of such men—every one of them a picture of soldierly bearing—side by side with European officers, could not but produce the best effect upon the mind of the Gallas, and upon the officers themselves, who would be led to feel that the Commander-in-Chief was proud to own them as an important part of his army, and to point to the services they had rendered as a credit and glory to the British nation as well as to themselves.

It is unnecessary to describe the ceremony of arraying the envoys in robes, shawls, and turbans of many and gaudy colours; perhaps, indeed, it is even better not to do so; for truth could not be told, without remarking upon the wonderful likeness between Gallas so arrayed and demure-looking monkeys which mischievous boys have rendered inexpressibly uncomfortable and ridiculous by muffling them up in red nightcaps and comforters. Every-

thing passed off very pleasantly; and the most gratifying reflection when the whole was over was, that the Gallas, from whom infinite annoyance was predicted, were as friendly as could be desired, and that this friendship could not fail to be cemented by the simple ceremony which had just taken place.

As regiment after regiment was moved up country from Zoula, and additional depôts formed, more senior officers became necessary. Accordingly Brigadier General Russell, Political Resident and Commandant, Aden, was called over to relieve General Stewart at Zoula, that officer on being relieved going to Senafe. Many would have rejoiced to see General Stewart posted to the front in the late re-distribution of the Force; but as the Commander-in-Chief adhered to his original intention of moving officers and troops forward in the order in which they arrived, their wish could not be gratified.

But it was considered to be by no means impossible that General Stewart might yet have command of one of the Advance Brigades, as General Schneider would probably be posted to the Pioneer Force. Had this been practicable, it would have been a well-merited compliment to the Bengal Army, and to its excellent Deputy Adjutant General, who was not selected to command the Bengal Brigade as being the senior Colonel on the establishment, but as being in Sir William Mansfield's opinion, and perhaps in the opinion of everybody else, the officer best fitted for the duty.

It is needless to recount General Stewart's soldierly qualities; but it may be mentioned that Sir William Mansfield, himself a "Queen's officer," and according to many, no friend of the "Company's officers," selected Colonel Stewart as Adjutant General of the Bengal Army; but the royal "George" would have no such shocking encroachment on the Horse Guards' preserves, and the claims of the best officer in Bengal had to kick the beam.

The Transport Train was still doing its work splendidly —a more efficient or better managed department than the Highland Transport Corps it would have been impossible to desire. The best officers in the world could not have prevented mules from getting tired, or from being laid up occasionally from galled backs and shoulders; for the slightest misfit in saddles or want of attention in loading became a serious matter among these steep and rugged mountain tracks.

When the column started from Antalo, Captain Hand brought on five hundred good mules, and three hundred of an inferior description; yet, notwithstanding the hard work and long marches they had been subjected to, not more than seven per cent. were unfit for work on March 21. A strict examination of every individual animal was made by Mr. Hallen and the sub-director on the 20th, they invalided every mule which was sick, galled, or in bad condition, and the percentage was what I have given above. Fifty per cent. of spare mules were ordered up to the front, and were to come on by forced marches without loads, so as to be at hand when "the grand rush upon Magdala" came to be made.

CHAPTER XV.

LAT, *March 22nd.*

"The grand rush upon Magdala" commenced sooner than any one had anticipated yesterday morning. Before the column marched from Mussageeta, it had transpired that a General Order was to be issued to-day, which would materially alter the *modus operandi* of the past. What that order was, or what the immediate occasion for it, few pretended to know; but it was generally suspected that the pace was to be quickened even before we reached the heights of Dalanta.

All speculation was soon set at rest by the publication of the expected G. O. C. which announced that a new distribution of the Force would come into operation on the morning of the 23rd, and that neither sleep should henceforth be allowed to our eyes, nor slumber to our eyelids, until we had reached Magdala. All kit, of whatsoever description, except a blanket, waterproof sheet, and the clothes each man wore was to be left behind at Lat, whence the start for the finish would be made at daybreak. The men were now to march with their kits upon their backs, the whole—blanket, sheet, great coat, canteen, rifle and ammunition—weighing under forty pounds; and every officer was put upon his honour to carry nothing whatever upon any spare horses he might have, beyond his own bedding and his horse's clothing.

In consequence, however, of reports received from the front, to the effect that the cold was intense, snow being visible on the hill-tops, tents were to be carried in the proportion of one to every twelve officers, and to every twenty non-commissioned rank and file. Officers of all regiments and departments were, as the expression goes, "doubled up" together; and there had been, and no doubt would be every night, a great amount of good-natured chaff as to how the space could best be economised, by what mathematical process fairly allotted, and how the "small ones" could be most advantageously disposed of. But the prospect of a few days' or weeks' campaigning in good earnest was looked forward to with extreme pleasure by almost every one; and the probability therefore was that the six feet by two under cover would only be availed of in the event of rain or snow by night, which those who knew the country did not much anticipate. As it turned out, their knowledge of the country was very inaccurate indeed.

The exact distance of Magdala from Lat was not, at this time, known with any degree of certainty; some believed

it was about seventy-two miles, while others computed it to be about eighty. Nor were the position and plans of Theodorus known with greater accuracy than they had hitherto been; but, all things considered, it was by far the wiser course to adopt, to get up steam ten or twenty miles too soon, rather than run the risk of erring on the other side.

Two different reports had been received, neither of which it was safe to disbelieve. The one stated that Theodorus was already prepared to defend the passage of the Beshilo, whence, if worsted, as it was not perhaps rash to conclude he would be, he could precipitately retreat to Magdala; the other gave out that he was busily engaged fortifying the hill upon which his fortress stood, though sorely puzzled as to the best means of setting about the work. His idea of engineering seemed to be, to order a trench to be dug here, and a wall to be thrown up there, while he strengthened his prestige with soldiers at the same time by soundly rating them as a parcel of scoundrels and blackguards, and boasting of the terrible things he would do to the British Army, of whose advance he hourly received fresh reports. The people of the country felt perfectly convinced that he would fight—a conviction which was shared by nine-tenths of the Advance Force, but the Abyssinians were by no means satisfied that speedy destruction awaited His Majesty. They had yet to learn that Theodorus was weak in the very points wherein he considered himself strong.

It is impossible to convey any adequate idea of the feelings which crowded upon every one now, or of the intense excitement which the thought—a week's march from Magdala caused,—an excitement which was becoming more and more intense as notch after notch of the remaining seven disappeared. That the distance would be accomplished in the time specified no one doubted; for it was well known that Sir Robert Napier meant that it should, unless some unlooked-for change took place in the position of affairs in front.

No one who can realize aught of the exigencies of warfare —how the news of to-day may completely upset all the elaborate arrangements of yesterday, will be surprised that the distribution of the Force published at Antalo should have been abandoned at Lat; or that the following should give place to yet another change hereafter. The 1st Brigade was to march on Morawur on the 23rd with the Commander-in-Chief, and to consist of the following troops :—

3rd Sind Horse.
A-21st R.A. (the steel Penns).
10th Company Royal Engineers.
Head-quarter Wing 33rd Foot.
Two Companies 23rd Punjab Pioneers.
Head-quarter Wing Belooch Battalion.
3rd and 4th Bombay Sappers and Miners.

The 2nd Brigade was only a day's march behind the first, and came on under Sir Charles Staveley, the brigadiers not yet having reached the front. It consisted of—

3rd Light Cavalry.
B-21st R.A. (steel guns).
Rocket and Naval Brigade.
4th King's Own.
Detachment 33rd Foot.
Head-quarter Wing 23rd Pioneers (Punjab).

The 3rd Brigade was composed as follows :—

Brigadier General Field, to command.
Captain Durand, Brigade Major.
Captain Edward, D. A. Q. M. G.
Head-quarter Wing 12th Bengal Cavalry.
G-14 R. A. (Murray's Armstrongs).
Two 8-inch mortars.
K Company Madras Sappers.
One Company 4th King's Own.
One Company 33rd Foot.
Two Companies Punjab Pioneers.

This brigade was employed in making the road from Lat to Magdala practicable for laden elephants, and was under orders to join the first and second brigades as soon as that work had been accomplished.

Orders were issued that the following troops, *en route* to the front, on reaching the third brigade, should be passed on to join the first and second brigades—3rd Dragoon Guards, Head-quarter Wing 10th Bengal Cavalry, 45th Foot, Head-quarter Wing 3rd N. I., and Left Wing Belooch Battalion. It may be mentioned that the 3rd Brigade brought on with it the tents and kit left by the other brigades at Lat.

The following official precis of the latest intelligence received from Magdala and the surrounding district was issued at Lat :—

"News has been received from Magdala up to the 15th "instant, when all the Europeans were well. A disturbance "had taken place in Dalanta, owing to an irruption of "the Wullo Gallas, who had also entered Daoont in large "numbers, made prisoners of the chiefs representing "Theodore there, and taken possession of the province in "the name of their own queen, notwithstanding Theodore "being in the neighbourhood at the time.

"The King completed the transport of all his guns to "the Magdala side of the Beshilo river on the 15th instant "(March). He himself could get into the fortress at any "time in a two hours' ride, but it is calculated it would still "take him ten to fifteen days (*i. e.* up to the end of March) "to convey his guns there from where they now are. He "has proclaimed once more a general amnesty, but was "treating his own soldiers with his usual cruelty. No change "is apparent in his demeanour towards the European "prisoners.

"The Wullo Gallas are said to be much divided among "themselves under rival chiefs.

"News up to the 20th has been received from the "neighbourhood of Magdala through M. Munzinger. At "that date the army of Wakshum Gobazye, under Dajaz "Meshasha, had been set in motion for the purpose of "advancing nearer to Magdala, in order to reassure the "people of Dalanta, as the latter had shown symptoms of "submitting once more to Theodore.

"The Wullo Gallas remained masters of Daoont, and "were keeping watch on Theodore's movements; their "hostility to him tending partly to unite them among "themselves.

"Wakshum Gobazye was still absent from Lasta, but "was expected to return soon.

"It is rumoured that Theodore meditates a retreat to "Godjam, but it is the opinion of the chiefs of Lasta that "it will be impossible for him to do so."

DILDEE, *March 25th.*

Between Lat and Morawur the Force had to encounter a succession of ascents and descents, many of which were difficult even for Abyssinia. Where the track was at all level, it ran along the face of sandstone hills, a precipice on one side, and the jungle-covered mountain face on the other. To diverge from the pathway was therefore altogether out of the question; and as the rock became abrased and worn by the feet of many mules, the work of the Pioneers all but disappeared, and nothing was left but a sloping rotten shelf upon which to walk. To such an extent did this abrasion proceed in some places, that horses not accustomed to walk upon a smooth plane inclined at an angle of 45 degrees, lost their footing altogether, and rolled down the precipice some twenty or thirty feet. The more sure-footed mules seemed to feel quite at home even on the worst places; they were all lightly laden and led separately,

instead of being tied together in threes and fours, so no serious stoppages occurred.

The camping ground at Morawur was reached in good time, notwithstanding the nature of the road. There, for the first time since the commencement of the campaign, one comparatively new to the work could see something of what campaigning really meant. Instead of well appointed and comfortable looking tents springing up by the score, they appeared in little groups of twos and threes; here a rug was spread underneath a spreading mimosa, there one of McGuire's patent hammocks—the patent part of it quite neglected—hung between two baubool bushes; while the flickering candle propped up between two stones in the little bell tent close by, threw just light enough to show that that tenement at least was not far short of its complement of twelve. And the experiences gained at Morawur were vastly extended at Dildee; the former introduced the novice to campaigning in fair weather; the latter showed him something of it in foul.

But I must not skip over the terrible twenty miles (Colonel Phayre called the distance thirteen) between these places. The road to Dildee was generally understood to be such as would render rapid progress impossible, so an early start was deemed advisable. At intervals of a quarter of an hour groups of baggage animals were despatched, and by nine o'clock all trace of the camp had disappeared.

For some time everything progressed smoothly though very slowly, and several steep ghauts were left behind without mishap or catastrophe—thanks to the exertions of Wakshum Gobazye's engineers, pioneers, and sappers. Unfortunately, however, either the perseverance of the Wakshum's men must have soon become exhausted, or, which is just as likely, Colonel Phayre must have lost the road.

I arrived in Abyssinia too late in the day to see Sooroo in a state of nature; but those who did so see it and spent

many a toilsome day upon it, unhesitatingly pronounced many parts of the road between Morawur and Dildee as difficult as Sooroo ever was. To say that it was devious, narrow, steep, and stony, overhung with prickly branches, and impeded by gnarled roots and trunks, would convey but a slight idea of its difficulty. There could be no mistake about its being the road patronized by the Abyssinians; but why Colonel Phayre should not have made an attempt to avoid it by occasionally taking the other and easier side of a hill, it was difficult to conceive. Several officers were fortunate enough to lose their way, and having strength of mind enough to do a little exploring on their own account, '*tentare novas vias*,' chanced upon a road which proved not only better, but a mile or two shorter, which was a consideration of some importance in the case of a twenty mile march. Such having been the case in one instance, it is not unreasonable to conclude that a slight expenditure of care and observation on the part of the reconnoitring party, might have discovered other short and easy routes.

But the chief feature of the march was its length. Though represented in the Quarter Master General's itinerary to be only thirteen miles, it cannot have been under eighteen, and many were convinced that it was over twenty. Colonel Phayre does not seem to have been altogether to blame for the length of the march; although his distances were not always distinguished for accuracy. The camp at Morawur was pitched a few miles to the northward of the ground which he had looked upon as best suited for it, hence the march to Dildee was lengthened by a corresponding amount.

The consequences of the mistake were very serious indeed. Before some of the mules had got much more than half way to Dildee, the day was far spent, and it must, under any circumstances, have been dark before they could have

reached the camp. Misfortunes never come singly, however; so, to intensify the situation, the thunder which had been rolling behind the hills all the afternoon, came nearer and nearer, till a fresh storm burst over the line of march. Rain followed, and the night became pitch dark, so dark that large objects a few yards in front of one were utterly undiscernable. The mules stopped the Artillery, the Artillery stopped the Engineers, the Engineers the Beloochees; and it became a grave question whether it was not highly imprudent to advance further till the morning.

Dangerous as it was to proceed, to encamp in such a position on such a night was still more so, therefore the march was continued. By eight o'clock the Beloochees came in, marching in single file, each holding on closely by the man in front of him, and they say that but for the lightning which was unusually vivid and constant, they could not possibly have groped their way through the darkness. The Commissariat Train did not arrive till next morning. The men and mules had been on foot, many of them at work, from eight o'clock in the morning till the same hour at night; they were drenched, cold, and hungry, yet many had to go cheerless and supperless to bed, or pass the night as best they could.

Sir Robert Napier did all he could to ameliorate their condition and supply their wants; and his sympathy, taking the practical form of biscuit and rum without stint, greatly improved the condition and spirits of Beloochees and Britons alike. But an advance on the morrow was out of the question; there was nothing for it, notwithstanding the inexpressible value of twenty-four hours at the time, but to spend the day watching one's only available suit of clothes drying on the nearest bush.

It will be most appropriate to introduce here the substance of remarks made by one who had constant opportunities of seeing the Commander-in-Chief "how he did,

and how he fared." Amidst all the privations, exposure, and hardships necessitated on all ranks in the campaign, Sir Robert Napier set the example (nobly followed by his Staff officers) of seeing to the comfort of the private soldier, and generally neglected follower, at all times. All shared alike. If short rations only were obtainable, the officer never obtained more than the native follower. The Commander-in-Chief himself set the example, all the officers in the head-quarter camp followed it, and I know for a fact that many a time have the officers on the Commander-in-Chief's Staff gone without a meal, or even shelter for a night, when the frost was on the ground, in order that they might not be in a better position than others whose rations or tents had not arrived. Tents and rations from Staff officers were freely offered to assist others, and years hence when the history of this campaign and its hardships will have been almost forgotten, many a poor fellow will remember with a grateful heart the great coat, handful of biscuit crumbs, or pound of meat offered him by his officers, when he knew well that they were offering all they had, and what no money on earth could buy for them or him.

Sir Robert Napier is a man acknowledged to possess a good and kind heart, but he owed a great deal of his success, and of the kind feeling between officers and men in this campaign, to the good feeling which prompted the heads of the different Staff departments to place themselves invariably on an equal footing in all matters of comfort or convenience with the youngest private soldier of the Force. No one in the whole army had a complaint to offer against any orders issued, or the manner in which they were issued; all knew that no unnecessary trouble or work was thrown on them, and that there must be and was good and sufficient reason for the issue of any order, whatever it might be. It is to this feeling that much of the success of the whole campaign was due.

A strict, hard Commander-in-Chief, with selfish martinets of Staff officers, would have found it a difficult matter to conduct any army through such a country as Abyssinia without a change of clothes, proper or sufficient shelter from sun or rain, and with bad food. But when men saw that those in high positions were faring as badly as they did themselves, and had evidently no wish to fare better than the men did, they were *compelled* to be contented, and to bear with good nature any amount of roughing to be undergone.

Exceptions there are to every rule, and Staff officers were found in the Force who would not lose their comforts in order to share with the men what they had. They left the Commander-in-Chief's camp and obtained permission to proceed on detached duty, so that they might obtain all the comforts they could. There were men, who, notwithstanding all that had been done for them, were found to grumble, but the exceptions both in officers and men in this campaign were very very few.

The country between Morawur and Dildee was extremely picturesque in many parts; but, unfortunately, few were in a frame of mind to enjoy scenery, however rare and beautiful. The route lay at times along the face of the highest hills, and at other times across their summits, from which could be seen, not one or two valleys, but twenties of them in the country below. Between the more lofty ranges, smaller ones and isolated hills, looking like gigantic mole heaps, were dotted so thickly that from one point more than fifty distinct peaks might be counted. Streams of water were abundant; and the vegetation, though by no means luxuriant, was varied and sufficiently abundant to prevent the country from appearing bare. Dildee itself turned out to be the most civilized place we had been in for many a day. Cattle, grain, vegetables, chickens, eggs, milk, and butter could be purchased to-day in almost any quantity, and at very reasonable prices.

Doubtless, however, the brigades that followed found the market less favourable than the first did.

News was now received from Magdala and its neighbourhood every other day; the latest intelligence came to hand yesterday, bearing date the 21st of March. The captives were all well, but, as will naturally be supposed, in a state of great anxiety regarding the decisive events which, be they pleasant or otherwise, the next ten days or so must bring forth. Theodorus was expected to be in Magdala next day or the day following, and of his intentions concerning them they were still in perfect ignorance. He had, it is true, ordered Mr. Rassam's fetters to be knocked off, had sent him presents of dollars, sheep, and cattle, and treated him with other marks of respect; but he was still as much a prisoner as ever, and the condition of the others remained unchanged.

The natives of the country, who knew Theodore's character only too well, would on no account have it that his treatment of Mr. Rassam was any indication of his real feelings or intentions, but the contrary. 'He may,' said they, 'send envoys to the English camp with all sorts of fair promises and honeyed words, but give up the captives —never. Valuable presents, of the precise sort he wants, might induce him to hand them over; but he would not be Theodore, if having got possession of the presents, he did not retain possession of the captives as well.'

Several spies from his camp, whose story was abundantly corroborated, gave quotations from his addresses to his soldiers, and from these it was evident that the English Army was to be "chawed up" without much ado. These men cautioned us most particularly to be on our guard against night attacks, more especially in Dalanta; and the grand excitement in camp for the 25th was, that Theodore would make his first essay on Friday next at 3 A. M., for said he "the English sleep soundly in the early

morning," Come when and how he liked, all felt persuaded he could do us no serious injury. Even on the line of march, in one of those horrid defiles, a few shots would have called together an array of skirmishers that would have been more than a match for the largest army he could thus suddenly have brought upon any point of the line.

Piquets and videttes had now been doubled; they invariably had their rifles loaded, and no precaution was omitted which could in any way ensure safety from surprise. It was not, of course, forgotten that those from whom we received much of our information were bitterly hostile to Theodorus, and trembled lest we should leave him alive in the country; they were not likely, therefore, to seek for news of a pacific nature, and in the absence of convincing proof, which it was very difficult to obtain, but little reliance was placed on what they said.

The impression that His Majesty would fight was, however, becoming more prevalent every day—an impression which derived some strength from the fact that considerable attention was being devoted by him to the hill of Islamgee. This hill was said to be about twelve hundred yards from Magdala, five hundred feet higher, and to command the fort. It was believed from enquiries conducted in various directions, that Theodore's army consisted in all of about 5,600 men, and that it was distributed as follows:—nine hundred musketeers, five hundred horsemen, and seventeen guns in Magdala, and twelve hundred musketeers and three thousand spearmen on Islamgee; but, as it appeared afterwards, these figures were greatly under the mark, representing the Abyssinian Army at about half its real strength.

Some anxiety was at this time felt regarding Sir Charles Staveley, who had been suffering severely from rheumatism—so severely that it was at one time feared he would be unable to continue in his position in front. Rest and quiet, which he most required, were not to be had, as Sir

Charles insisted on being carried in a dhoolie with his column, rather than remain a day's march behind. He was now happily recovering from his painful illness, and would have arrived here with the 2nd Brigade to-morrow, had it not been necessary for him to remain a few marches behind, that he might bring on a column hitherto commanded by a somewhat inexperienced officer.

Rheumatic fever had sent Lieutenant Hozier of the Life Guards back to Europe, thus depriving the Force of a talented and clever officer, and one of its most genial members, and the Commander-in-Chief of a zealous Assistant Military Secretary. Dr. Currie, the principal medical officer, and Dr. Martin, overtook the First Brigade on at Dildee.

On the 26th the Head-quarters and First Brigade were to advance eight miles, and had before them an ascent of 3,600 feet, followed by an equally formidable descent. Four more marches would, it was calculated, bring the 1st Brigade, by that time joined by the 2nd, to the plain of Dalanta, and as the Dragoon Guards and Bengal Cavalry were coming up by double marches, a day's halt would, it was believed, suffice for the concentration of the whole of the Advance Force. The elephants had already passed Lake Ashangi with the Armstrongs, mortars, and ammunition ; the 45th Regiment and 3rd N. I. were also rapidly closing up. Delays were, however, rendered unavoidable by circumstances in the rear of which no one at present had any conception.

CHAPTER XVI.

WUNDACH, *March 26th.*

After a day's halt at Dildee, which was rendered unavoidable by the excessive length of the march between that place and Morawur, the Commander-in-Chief and Staff, accompanied by the first brigade, advanced on Wundach. Of the road nothing need be said, except that the first few miles led over the crest of a steep hill which might easily have been turned, while the rest of the march was an ascent of 3,600 feet, which there was no possibility of avoiding.

Wundach is not more than eight miles from Dildee; the hill on which the camp was situated rises above the sources of the Ein Taccazze river. The water rises in two copious springs, which, rumour led us to believe, we should find hot; of course we found them excessively cold. The Taccazze, as those few who know anything of the geography of Africa are aware, pours its water into the Blue Nile; so these springs may, in a measure, be looked upon as the source of that mysterious river.

Bleak and bare as the immediate vicinity of the camp was, its situation was not devoid of interest. To the southward stretched the precipitous bank of the Taccazze, the first of the three great watercourses which yet lay between us and Magdala; the second was the Djedda; and the last the Beshilo, the passage of which, native rumour said, would be disputed. Closing the view to the southward was the lofty plateau of Wadela, the scene of Theodore's recent difficulties and temporary triumph. From a hill which rose above our camp, and the post of one of the cavalry piquets, might be seen lofty peaks covered with snow—a strange sight under a tropical sun.

The camp lay extended on the slope of a hill, on a fine black soil, soon turned by hail and rain into most tenacious

mud, but from which had just been reaped a plenteous crop of grain. For strategical purposes the camp was admirably chosen; but I cannot say much for its comfort. The vanguard of the Force had hardly arrived before the summits of the hills were veiled with thunder clouds, and hail and rain poured down on the unsheltered troops. The few available tents were pitched with haste, and instantly crowded, "the more the merrier" being the maxim of the day. The camp being on the slope of a bare hill, wood could only be procured from a distance; and when at last the perseverance of some enterprising ghorawallah was rewarded with a small armful, his precious burden steadily refused to burn, whereby the prospects of dinner were rendered most distant and most dismal.

All these misfortunes, however, which if shared by one or two solitary individuals, would have been unbearable, seemed only to increase the general good humour. As if to contribute its quota to the amusement, a playful bullock performed a sympathetic but blundering war-dance through the busy camp, and insisted upon a sturdy sergeant of the 4th performing a pirouette in its company. In the absence of the conventional China shop, it upset a few cooking pots, destroyed the studied symmetry of several tents, and could only be induced to desist from a final "grand round" by a couple of bullets through his skull, and a judicious hack from the tulwar of an old hand from among Jacob's sowars, who had joined in the chase.

Matters such as these may to some appear unimportant and trivial; but I am sure the majority of my readers will be glad to hear that campaigning in Abyssinia afforded amusement even in a rainy day, of which officers and men alike were not slow to take advantage.

The second and third brigades were not allowing themselves to be outstripped by the first; there was only one day's march between the first and second, and two

days' between the second and third. The 4th King's Own joined the first brigade at Wundach, the 33rd Regiment being transferred to the second. The third brigade was bringing on the elephants even more speedily than had been anticipated ; and it was evident that by the time the first two had crossed the Beshilo, the third will not be far behind. The burning desire of officers and men to be present at any engagement that might take place, and to march into Magdala with the rest of the Force, put fresh life and strength into every muscle, and all obstacles in the way of the elephants disappeared, as if cumbrous and prosaic crowbars were fairies' wands.

No fresh news of importance was received from Magdala on March 26th. A letter from M. Munzinger reported matters to be *in statu quo*. The army of Wakshum Gobazye was looking down from the heights of Dalanta upon the terrible "Tedros," and the terrible "Tedros" was looking up from beyond the Beshilo at the army of Wakshum Gobazye. The messengers who brought these letters asserted that His Majesty was constructing a strong stockade before the hill of Islamgee, so that the British should have three positions to carry—Arogee, Islamgee, and Magdala, before their victory could be complete. This, however, was all taken *cum grano*, as it was without reliable corroboration.

News was received at Wundach that a scrimmage of the Donnybrook Fair order had taken place at Antalo between Abyssinians. It seems that an armed band had entered the bazaar and carried off all the corn and wine and oil that their countrymen had brought in for sale, before the military were well aware of anything unusual having taken place. A stout Parsee seems to have plied a stick to some purpose ; but what was he among so many ? In the fullness of their hearts, these hoary old rascals announced their intention of looting the Sooltan's mules next. This,

however, was thought by General Collings to be too much of a joke; the British lion was fairly roused at last; a few troopers were got together, and they set out after the marauders,—at a walk! It is needless to add that they caught no one. Lest inroads of the kind might become fashionable among an unsettled and bellicose people, it was determined to strengthen the Antalo garrison forthwith.

MOOJA, *March 27th.*

The march to Mooja was a short and easy one, though a country possessed of but few attractions. So barren were the hills, and so strait and narrow the cultivated valleys, that one was driven to the conclusion, that if the villages dotted here and there were inhabitated, their inhabitants must either subsist on locusts and wild honey, or earn a dishonest livelihood. The country was but thinly populated, and the people seemed to be possessed of that independent spirit which is said to characterize the hardy mountaineer, without his hospitality. They manifested less curiosity regarding the Force and its mission than those of any other province through which we have yet passed; perhaps the "highland laddies" who were fit to carry arms had been drafted away "to fight the foe" for Wakshum Gobazye.

An instance of their independence occurred at Wundach last night. A brother of the Wakshum's having come to pay his respects to Sir Robert Napier, was overtaken by night and a storm; and as there was no room for him in the camp, His Excellency tried to find him a suitable lodging in a village close by. But the villagers positively refused to let him in; "they paid their tribute punctually "to the Wakshum, and would have nothing more to do "with either him or his brother." Having no doubt excited commiseration for this scion of a noble house, it may

as well be stated that he was not left out in the cold after all, notwithstanding the churlishness of the villagers; for a poor woman—a widow indeed—took compassion on him, and provided him with a lodging in her humble shieling.

Mooja is situated in the extreme south of Lasta, a few miles from the river Tacazze, which the first brigade was to cross to-morrow, halting at a place called Santara, about a mile and a half into Wadela.

Mooja was said to be fifty-two miles from Magdala; but how the distance had been calculated with such accuracy, I am quite unable to say. Certain it is, that distances hitherto had varied in the most extraordinary manner, and apparently without any good reason. Short marches were found to conduce more to speed in the end than long ones, and it was now absolutely necessary that the baggage and rear guard should be in camp before dark; so it was considered probable that the march to Magdala, even if prosecuted without interruption, would occupy five more days.

As I have said before, the concentration of the Force was not likely to involve any great delay. The head-quarter wing of the 33rd Foot, the 3rd Light Cavalry, B-21 R. A., Naval Brigade, the detachments of Sind Horse relieved from postal duty, the head-quarters and four companies 23rd Punjab Infantry, were now at Wundach, and the left wing of the 33rd was close to that place. Not two days' march behind the second was General Field's column, now consisting of two companies of Bombay Sappers, a company of Madras Sappers, the elephants with four guns G-14 R. A., and two 8-inch mortars of 5-25 R. A., head-quarters and two hundred men 10th N. I., and the head-quarters and squadron 12th Bengal Cavalry.

The following had left Antalo *en route* to the front—head-quarter wing 45th Regiment, head-quarter wing 3rd N. I., 3rd Dragoon Guards, and left wing Belooch Regiment;

and as they had full liberty to cut out the pace to suit themselves, no doubt was entertained that they would be up in time, especially as rumours of actual warfare were rife in the rear. The 26th (Cameronians), or part of them, were now being pushed on from Senafe to Addigerat, and the 10th Bengal Cavalry would eventually relieve the 12th, and both come to the front, did time permit.

The cold here was not so intense as it was at Wundach last night, as though higher, the camp was more sheltered. At Wundach this morning there was ice an eighth of an inch thick on the pools.

SANTARA, *March 28th.*

The first night at Santara was raw and gusty as a winter night on the Welsh mountains. The plain of Wadela, upon which the head-quarters and first brigade of the Force were now encamped, is eleven thousand feet above the sea, and exposed to every wind that blows. Not a single tree or bush is visible upon its whole expanse to afford shade from the burning sun by day, and shelter from the piercing wind by night; and pelting showers frequently scud over it, as cold and wintry as any that were ever driven across Cader Idris or Plynlimmon. Firewood there was none; only a chief sent in a seasonable present of some to the Commander-in-Chief, and the villagers readily sold the roof trees and door posts of their houses, trusting to being able to replace them at their leisure when the army had gone.

Though the march from Mooja was not so long as many preceding marches, it was second in importance and difficulty to none. The Taccazze river was crossed, and the ascent of the plateau of Wadela accomplished, which last was a feat in itself. The descent into the river's bed from

Mooja was rough and steep, but presented no difficulties which a little care and good deal of patience could not overcome.

Very much more formidable was the ascent of the ghaut bounding the valley on the south, which stood forth like a wall three thousand feet in height, and seemed to bid defiance to the army resting at its base. But the Punjabees had been at work there since the morning, and were now carving a path curiously and skilfully up its precipitous sides; though such was the height they had reached, that their drab uniforms were perfectly undistinguishable from the grey rock of which the plateau is largely composed. By and bye a signal from the top announced the track cleared; the column began to ascend; and after four hours' hard climbing—the stiffest three and a half miles we had yet encountered—the whole had reached the summit. In their ignorance of what the next few days might bring forth, the prevailing sentiment was, that if the Djedda and Beshilo valleys were equally difficult, it would be hard to say what even an Abyssinian army might not do towards defending the passage.

The Taccazze, as seen in March, hardly deserved the name of river; but it was a fine clear stream, its bed covered with pebbles rather than rocks. Its valley must be about four hundred yards in breadth, and seen from above presents a pleasing contrast to the bare grey hills on either side; especially at the season when fields of wheat and barley cover the greater part of its surface. Were the plateau of Wadela at all wooded, it would be one of the most picturesque spots in Abyssinia; but the hills which rise upon it to the height of seven or eight hundred feet are uncrowned by a single tree. Upon the summits of those hills lying to the southward, Colonel Phayre—his peace disturbed by constant cries of "Wolf"—had pitched three sentries, whose presence there, as they stood shivering in the blast, added to the bare and uninviting nature of

the landscape. Good crops of grain had lately been reaped in this part of the province, and the produce was being brought forth in large quantity for sale.

The camp at Mooja was thrown into some excitement by the arrival of a special messenger from Colonel Phayre, bringing intelligence to the effect that M. Munzinger was missing and that Theodorus has recrossed the Beshilo. It was only natural that great excitement should be produced, as the news seemed to imply that another consul had been added to the list of Theodore's captives, and that His Majesty was actually on his way to bring matters to a decisive issue.

M. Munzinger, who, it will be remembered, was with the army of Wakshum Gobazye at Dalanta, had gone out for a two days' reconnaissance of the country and roads. During these two days it happened that the supply of water in Islamgee failed, and Theodore's dragoons had to bring their horses to the Beshilo to water. But Wakshum's cavalry was not to know that this was their purpose; so, seeing a move made in the direction of Dalanta, the whole fifteen hundred agreed with one accord to retreat to Cosso Amba, a fort about four miles to the east of this camp. Now instead of the Dejaz Mechecha reporting to Colonel Phayre that M. Munzinger was nowhere to be found, M. Munzinger ought to have reported the same thing regarding the Dejaz, who, with great *naivete*, expressed the greatest surprise and thankfulness for M. Munzinger's marvelous escape and his own. Both the above-named gentlemen were expected to come into camp to-morrow.

News from the neighbourhood of Magdala had at this date been received up to the 27th instant, when Theodorus was still on Islamgee. The prisoners were ascertained to be all well, though no letter, later than the 21st or 22nd instant, had been received from them. Writing must now have been more difficult and precarious than hitherto, especially

as His Majesty had expressed his abhorrence of the practice of "writing to the papers" which certain of them indulged. The King was in the way of telling his soldiers, with well-assumed holy joy, that at last the Kings of Tarshish and the isles were bringing him presents, in fulfilment of the prophecy spoken by his ancestor king David, and that the English were most desirous of making peace with him. But, as M. Munzinger drily observed, "not every one believed this."

That His Majesty intended to contest the palm for gunnery with us, all the Abyssinians and many in the Force entertained no doubt. Sir Robert Napier was evidently determined to be prepared for him, come when he liked, for the first brigade awaited at Santara the arrival of the second, which was expected to come up on the morrow. His Excellency was strongly advised by Wakshum Gobazye's chiefs not to venture beyond the Taccazze, except in force, as they felt persuaded that mischief was intended. But their headlong flight from Dalanta without any cause, showed that their dread of Theodore had completely got the better of their reason.

The chief consideration inducing delay for the second brigade here was, that their mules were all but exhausted, and that, should the first brigade proceed rapidly, the second might fail to overtake it.

General Schneider joined and took over command of the first brigade at Santara; Generals Sir Charles Staveley and Wilby were with the second.

CHAPTER XVII.

GHAZOO, *March* 31*st*.

Several ardent spirits, impelled by a desire to see Magdala afar off, had, ever since they lost sight of Ashangi, daily ridden out of camp to some elevated position whence enthusiastic guides assured them they could get a glimpse of that fortress. Sometimes they had to rest satisfied with a long look at the cloud behind which they were told the amba lay; at other times cloud and all were hid from view by a thick mist which the most eagle eye tried in vain to penetrate; but on one or two occasions a flat-topped hill loomed out in the distance which the guides declared to be none other than the stronghold of the Negus. One of these hills had been passed already, and the others had been clearly ascertained not to be what the gaum-wallahs of Lasta and Wadela represented.

The curiosity of the first brigade was now, however, on the eve of being gratified, for even the cautious M. Munzinger, who had but just returned from Dalanta, expressed his belief that Magdala would be visible on the morrow, at a distance of about thirty miles in a south-easterly direction. So often had the distance to Magdala been misrepresented, and so limited had every one's knowledge of the country invariably proved, that many had been driven to take refuge from false alarms and disappointed expectations, in a state of chronic disbelief which nothing would dispel except the booming, or more probably the bursting, of Theodore's guns on the hill before them. Many, therefore, laughed to scorn the idea of Magdala being so near; but those who had not surrendered to the disappointments of the past fortnight, and could yet take a reasonable view of things, looked forward with certainty to seeing the goal to-morrow, clouds and mists not intervening between it and Bet Hor.

As stated in a former chapter, the route by way of Bet Hor was not the shortest that might have been selected; but it was said to be by far the best—a statement the truth of which all were prepared to take for granted, should the twelve miles between Santara and Ghazoo prove to be a fair specimen of what remained of the plain of Wadela beyond. Not a tool had been lifted up on any part of it, yet the road was all that could be desired, being for the most part across a fine elastic meadow, over which the mules tripped as gaily as if they had renewed their youth. But, unfortunately, the plateau continued bare; not a handful of grass or a bundle of hay could be obtained, so no small amount of ingenuity was called into requisition in order to obtain the amount of heat requisite for cooking purposes.

Hornblendic rock was abundant a few miles from camp, and this, in default of wood, was eagerly seized upon by both officers and men, who quite supposed, from its black, shiny, mineral appearance, they had made a valuable and timely discovery of coal. They found, however, that they might just as well have brought in loads of flint rock for fuel; and after many ineffectual attempts to light it, were compelled to come to the conclusion forced by this same substance upon His Highness the Pacha of Egypt, that all black minerals do not belong to the coal formation. Besides these almost pure masses of hornblende, basalt, sandstone, and syenite cropped up here and there along the line of march.

Like most of our camping grounds in Abyssinia, Ghazoo took its name from the stream upon which it was situated; there was no village deserving of a name within several miles of it, indeed no village had been seen between that place and the Taccazze. All camps were, as may be supposed, selected with increased care as we approached the wild beast's lair, strategical considerations carrying most weight. A finer position for a camp than that occupied by

the first brigade at Ghazoo had not presented itself since we left Senafe, which, however, had the advantage of it in being supplied with forage and fuel. The fine open plain would have afforded facility for carrying out any manœuvres of infantry, cavalry, or artillery; while the higher ground which surrounded it supplied choice places of vantage for piquets and outposts. The feeling was by no means general that Theodorus would waste his energies over a night attack; but had he been inclined to indulge in his favourite mode of warfare, he could not have selected a locality more unfavourable for it than the plain of Ghazoo.

Having referred to night attacks, it may be mentioned that special preparation had been made against any attempt of the kind. A powerful lime light had now arrived; and this, on any alarm being given, was to be lit in the centre or front of the camp, a shade so directing the light as to discover at once the position and movements of an enemy within five or six hundred yards, and, at the same time, shroud those of the Force in thickest darkness. This light was, of course, under the charge of Lieutenant Morgan, R. E., of the Army Signals Department,—which afforded a guarantee that all that experience, science, energy, and intelligence could do, would be effected in order to frustrate Theodore's knavish tricks by making the night light about him.

The second brigade arrived at Santara on the morning of March 30th under General Wilby, and was following up the first at an interval of one day's march. The third brigade had received instructions to join the second forthwith, so that, the marches being short, the concentration of the whole Force might be effected by a double march without necessitating any special halt for the purpose. This arrangement was rendered necessary in consequence of the difficulty, amounting almost to an impossibility, of obtaining

in one afternoon any adequate provender for the horses and mules, were both brigades to have marched in one column.

The strength of General Schneider's brigade was materially increased at Santara by the transfer to it of the Rocket Battery, the head-quarters of the 23rd Punjab Pioneers —as fine a regiment as any in the Force—and the Engineer park. The Rocket Battery not only constituted a novel feature of the brigade of which it formed part, but was in itself an important element of strength. It was a perfect treat to see the sailors, whether in camp or on the march; they systematically made light of all the inconveniences and hardships to which they might be exposed; and these, in the chase they had had after the van of the army, must have been greater than those experienced by almost any other part of the Force. If a mule "got adrift" it was quickly and cheerfully "taken in tow," not unfrequently being put upon "the right tack" by a skilful turn of its "steering gear," as they termed its caudal extremity; and loads were given a lurch to starboard or to port, as the case required, with an alacrity and cheerfulness which it made every one's work lighter to witness.

It is worthy of notice that the greatest friendship at once sprung up between the sailors and the Punjabees, who mutually cheered each other whenever an opportunity presented itself; they evidently appreciated each other as "brothers tried," notwithstanding the wide dissimilarity in many points that existed between them. The band of the Pioneers often went of its own accord to the camp of the Naval Brigade and played their liveliest tunes, while "Jack" showed his sense of their kindness by treating them to hornpipes and reels in return. And not only so, but when the Punjabees reached the camping ground before the Naval Brigade, they used to delight in pitching tents for the sailors before their arrival, and the sailors, on their part, did the same for the Sikhs whenever opportunity

offered. Such *bonne camaraderie* could not be explained; but it was perfectly delightful to witness,—the more so on account of its rarity between European and native troops.

General Sir Charles Staveley had by this time so far regained his health as to be able to accompany the second brigade to the front. The gallant General had to be carried in a dhoolie; but, now that he had reached a less formidable country than that north of the Taccazze, he hoped to be able to dispense with that dreary and uncomfortable means of locomotion. The disappointment to Sir Charles and to the Force generally would have been great, had he not been able to assist in bringing to a conclusion the campaign to the progress of which his unremitted and valuable services had so largely contributed.

Warlike rumours were now received from the front almost daily, and few entertained any doubt but that Theodorus had determined upon resisting to the utmost of his power the advance of the British army beyond the Beshilo. What that resistance would amount to, it was difficult to surmise. The valley of Arogee, the hill of Islamgee, and the approaches to Magdala were said to be fortified by every device known to Abyssinian engineers; and the effort to transport as many guns as possible into Magdala itself still continued.

That His Majesty had numerous spies watching and reporting our progress is certain; indeed on the arrival of the van of the column at Ghazoo several groups of horsemen were observed on the hills around, whose appearance left no room for doubt as to what their errand was. A party of Sind Horse was sent out to cut off their retreat; but they observed the movement, and made off before the sowars could circumvent them.

Per contra, the Amazon queen of the Gallas was said to be close upon Magdala with a large army; Wakshum Gobazye was reported to be advancing from Debra Tabor, where he had been building himself a house; and Theodore's

soldiers were deserting him in great numbers. Such was believed to be the situation at present, different in no important degree from that of a month ago, except that the end was four weeks nearer.

There was at this time something more than ominous whispers abroad that the Advance Force would shortly find itself short of provisions, unless flour could be obtained in Wadela. None had been forthcoming as yet; but as there was no want of barley, surely, it was thought, there ought to be flour as well. The Commissariat had only a week's provisions in hand; none were coming on in consequence of the breakdown of the native carriage beyond Ashangi—some said beyond Antalo—and the depôts from Lat onwards were all but exhausted. Sugar and rum had not been procurable for now more than a week; vegetables, too, had been scanty. Unless the Abyssinians resumed work immediately, there was no choice left but to halt until mules should return to Ashangi for flour and rice, or proceed rapidly to Magdala, take it by storm, and hurry back. To remain before that fortress, where probably the supply of bullocks might fail, was out of the question.

So admirably did the native transit work from Senafe to Antalo, that the supplying of the depôts was left to it, even as far as Lat and three stages beyond; now that it had suspended operations, the Force was in an exceedingly unpleasant position. Some attributed this defection to bad feelings engendered by a flogging administered to an Abyssinian carrier for broaching cargo; others said it was the doing of Wulda Yessoos, the Amba Alaji rebel, who went away from the durbar at Attala a disappointed man, not having received the presents and assurances of support and assistance he had foolishly expected.

General Merewether, Major Grant, and Captain Moore returned to Attala on March 31, to investigate matters, and, if possible, restore the convention.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SINDEE, *April 3rd.*

The *contretemps* in the matter of native carriage, occasioned chiefly by the machinations of the Amba Alaji villain, had already caused two days' delay, and though the neck of the difficulty was broken for the present, might yet cause more in the future. Distressing as this delay was—all the more so that it was not only unforeseen, but unexpected as well—it would have been madness to place an army of six thousand men before a fort the strength and environs of which were utterly unknown, with only one day's supplies available, and no prospect of having the larder speedily replenished. Had Wulda Yessoos heard all the threats and imprecations uttered against him in consequence of the constant trouble and annoyance he seemed determined to create, the probability is that he would have felt exceedingly uncomfortable. But hard words and soft were alike ineffectual to ward off starvation; so Major Grant and Captain Moore had to go back, the one to Ashangi, the other to Attala, to induce the recusant Abyssinians to resume work once more. Through their exertions, the two months' supplies for the whole Force sent on to Attala by Major Mignon were now on their way up, the hitch regarding transport having been overcome both at that place and at Ashangi. Major Grant and Captain Moore are exactly the men to do any work well; and this delicate and difficult duty they performed with a tact and success which reflect the greatest credit upon them. These officers were themselves accompanying and urging on the convoys, so that no delay which could by any possibility be avoided would be allowed to interfere with their progress. It may be mentioned in connection with this, that Major Chamberlain, who pro-

ceeded to the Djedda on the afternoon of April 3 with his Pioneers, had already reported large purchases of grain, flour, and ghee. Indeed it seems as if these Punjabees, men and officers, were *facile principes* at whatever they set their hands to do.

In order that the supposed prime mover in this defection of native carriers might have an abiding sense of the sword of Damocles over his head, and to afford protection to the native convoys, a detachment of infantry and a squadron of cavalry were ordered to Attala from Antalo. General Merewether only returned as far as the Taccazze, and, having made all right there, rejoined head-quarters yesterday.

In the meantime, every effort was being made to procure grain and flour in Wadela. Captain Speedy, than whom there was hardly a more valuable officer in the Force, had been making daily rounds among the villages, purchasing flour from those whose want of enterprise prevented their bringing it in for sale. On April 2 he succeeded in procuring about 1,000 lbs., and would have procured twice as much more, had not the soldiers of the Wakshum interfered to prevent him. It was impossible to arrive at the real reason of their interference; ready and plausible liars as they were, they could easily reconcile their practice with their professions. The Dejaz Mechechah had, it is true, made a great show of zeal in the issue of orders likely to facilitate Captain Speedy's work; but who could tell what private instructions might have been issued to his soldiers, a few of whom were billeted in every village. It will readily be understood from the above how uncertain, at this juncture, were the movements of the Force.

To obviate all risk of supplies running short before Magdala, it was agreed on all hands that the army ought to arrive there fully prepared for a stay of ten days if neces-

sary, and that in order to do so, it must start from Sindee provisioned for fifteen days, or with the certainty of receiving supplies from the rear. The march to Magdala would certainly occupy four days, probably five, during the greater portion of which time we should be in Dalanta—a province said to have been swept of everything by Theodorus—or upon the borders of it. To the Djedda river, the descent and ascent of its precipitous banks, across the Dalanta plateau, the crossing of the Beshilo, and the march upon Magdala itself, would, it was expected, be the programme of five days.

The camp at Sindee was situated about nine miles from the Djedda valley, and to the north-west of Magdala. It may indeed be said to have been one and the same place with Abdikoom, the camp immediately beyond Ghazoo, for though the distance occupied two days, the marches were respectively sixteen and two miles. The absurdity of having moved a large camp a couple of miles on an unusually hot day, and to a place very badly supplied with water, is accounted for by the fact that the Quartermaster General was four or five miles 'out' in his estimate of the distance—this time on the opposite side from that on which he had usually erred.

The day was not altogether lost, however; for Sir Robert Napier immediately started for the Djedda river on a reconnoitring expedition. After ascending from the valley in which the few muddy and fœtid pools termed the Sindee river are situated, the plateau of Dalanta was seen to stand forth at a distance of nine miles, as defiantly and formidably as that of Wadela had done. Beyond the plateau, about eighteen miles off as the crow flies, the well-known outline of Magdala and the hills around it could be distinctly made out by the naked eye, and thither telescopes and binoculars were constantly directed.

It was no difficult matter to run one's eye over the Taja

Tanta hills on the east, the Theddat on the south, and those beyond the Kulkulla on the west, and to say which was Magdala. Any one who had seen an amba at once pointed to it as a position so exceedingly difficult of access and strong that it must be none other than the chosen home of the Negus.

Though it was apparent that the crossing of the Djedda would almost be a day's march of itself, it was satisfactory to observe that several circumstances combined to render it comparatively easy. The descent into the river's bed could be made by a gorge or gap in the bank ; water there was none except perhaps in pools ; and advantage would be taken of Theodore's road up to the southern or Dalanta plateau. That road bore witness to the perseverance and pains-taking of its maker, but would have satisfied the critical eye of Captain Goodfellow better, had His Majesty been a little more particular as to his gradients. Adhering closely to the old Roman plan—and everybody knows how splendidly the old Romans could make roads—he never went round the base of a hill if he could by any possibility go over the top. Though this was evidently his general rule, he had, fortunately for us, been obliged to depart slightly therefrom at the Djedda.

Letters received from the captives in Magdala, and intelligence communicated by Abyssinian spies and others about two months ago, stated that Theodore had laid waste the district of Wadela, burning villages, carrying off cattle, and leaving the fields desolate.

Such may perhaps have been the case ; but certainly the country near the Djedda bore no trace of the despoiler's hand. Hundreds of cattle and sheep grazed upon the finest pastures we had seen beyond Antalo ; large fields were alive with the rustle of barley ready for the sickle ; huge piles of wheat straw proclaimed the abundance of last harvest, and the husbandmen were shouting as merrily as

they followed their teams as if an enemy had never been within their borders. We had now seen the whole of Wadela from the Taccazze to the Djedda ; and throughout the vast plain, no part was so bare and poverty-stricken as that where Theodore was not, and where the brave army of Wakshum Gobazye was.

Shots had now been exchanged with some of Theodore's men, and Abyssinian blood spilt, though it was unfortunately the blood of our friends, whose close resemblance to the enemy proved fatal to them. On the night of April 1, a party of horsemen were seen to reconnoitre well the camp at Abdikoom, and to note particularly the position of a piquet of Sind horse. The piquet, reinforced, was on the alert, especially about the fatal hour of three, shortly before which the Abyssinians were seen to approach from the opposite direction to that by which they had taken their departure in the evening. Being challenged and fired upon, they returned the salute and retreated, no one being, so far as is known, any the worse for the interchange of civilities.

Last night, however, a body of Wakshum's cavalry, led by his minister Dejaz Mechecha, came into camp to pay their respects to the Commander-in-Chief, and to introduce a chief of Dalanta who desired to befriend and assist us. The ceremony over, they were safely passed out of the camp of the first brigade. Having proceeded some distance out of camp, Mechecha ordered his men to depart and billet themselves on the surrounding villages. The consequence was what might have been expected. These men went roaming over the country around the camps of the first and second brigades, one party coming in contact with a piquet of the Light Cavalry. The piquet fired upon them, and, believing them to be a party of Theodore's horsemen scouring the country for spoil, charged after them, reloading and firing vigorously. One Abyssinian was shot through the head, another run through with a sabre,

and several severely wounded. In consequence of the alarm excited in the camp of the second brigade, the 3rd Light Cavalry were ordered out to aid the piquet, and the whole of the brigade, Armstrongs and all, put in motion for array of battle. But thanks to the fleetness of the Abyssinian tattoes, the ardour of the Mahrattas had to expend itself on the chase.

The consequences that might have resulted from this need not be enumerated; fortunately, instant explanation, apologies, and compensation averted them, and grain and flour were procured on the following day in similar quantities to the purchases of the day before. Mechecha must have seen himself, as everybody else did, that his own inadvertence and rashness, more than anything else, led to the misadventure, and that neither design nor carelessness on the part of any English officer conduced to it.

Letters had, at this date, been received from Magdala, dated March 29. The captives were then well, naturally anxious and apprehensive as to what any day might bring forth, and, of course, on the best mutual terms, as they have ever been. Theodorus in his letters to them still ignored the advance of the English army to their rescue, and scarcely any change was perceptible in his demeanour. He had visited Magdala, closely inspected its defences, and given instructions regarding them. Dr. Blanc and Lieutenant Prideaux were now relieved of their chains. Three of his generals, who were at variance with each other, he had removed from office, stating that he was to fight the English, and could have nothing but unanimity in his army. The road from Islamgee to Magdala was occupying most of his attention, and would be finished on the 30th or 31st ultimo. It was supposed that he intended to retire by this road into Magdala in the event of his being driven from the Arogee valley and the Islamgee spur—a contingency which he was, perhaps, not unwise to provide against. The

wisdom of the provision made by him was, however, very questionable ; for having only two six-foot gates by which to withdraw an army of eight or ten thousand men, it required but a short calculation to ascertain the probable number of rounds that would have been poured into the crowd before the last section had reached its shelter, had he adopted this mode of procedure. Besides, it was considered very doubtful whether some plan would not be devised by Sir Robert Napier for cutting off even this last refuge from him. But, the fact is, nobody knew what Theodore's plans for conducting the defence of his amba may then have been; only there was now no longer room to doubt that he meant to do his utmost in its defence, and if needs must, to sell his life as dearly as possible. And, said most, better far would it be, that one who had never yet known defeat should die in the heat of battle, than survive and mourn over his ruined prestige and his vanished power. Better would it be for the victor, too, to have nothing to do with such a captive, except provide him with a decent burial.

There had luckily been no repetition of the weather we experienced at Wundach, Dildee, and Santara. Had those rainy, cold, and frosty nights continued, the hospitals would most assuredly have been filled to overflowing. Though the health of the troops continued remarkably good, there were at present more patients in hospital suffering from diarrhœa than there had yet been beyond Zoula. Strangely enough, the per-centage of European and Indian troops suffering from this complaint was almost the same. Bad water and lack of grog were believed to have brought on these attacks, which were doubtless pre-induced by the exposure and wet at the places above mentioned. Dr. Currie determined upon establishing a field hospital at Sindee, as the exceedingly small amount of sick-carriage (one dhoolie for every hundred men) precluded the possibility of taking any man forward who was likely

to require assistance, much more one who already required it. The field hospital was placed under the charge of Assistant-Surgeon Maconnachie,—it is needless to add, much to his disappointment. Though Dr. Maconnachie was the only officer available for this duty, it would have been difficult to find one more qualified for it.

The cheering news from the rear regarding provisions, and the fact that Theodore was very restless in front, decided His Excellency to move his camp on the 4th. The first brigade was on that day to be roused at five o'clock, and to march at half-past six on Averkote, on the Dalanta side of the Djedda. The second brigade was also to march upon Bet Hor, and probably close to the river. The Punjab Pioneers, the A-21st R. A., and two companies of the 4th King's Own, marched on the afternoon of the 3rd, under Colonel Milward, R. A., in order to clear the road—an easy matter—and to occupy the heights of Dalanta early next morning. The G-14th were upon their own wheels again, and would continue so up to the Djedda, and probably across the Dalanta plateau. The 12th Bengal Cavalry were to join the first brigade on the 4th. The brigades were now first and second only in name; the Force of about 4,500 fighting men marched in one large column.

A violent thunderstorm accompanied with heavy rain passed over Dalanta and Wadela on the evening of the 3rd of April.

MINABOO, DALANTA, *April 5th.*

The march from Sindee to Minaboo presented more of interest, and, at the same time, more of difficulty than any of those beyond Ashangi had done. For the first time the Force found itself on the very track of Theodorus, could see where his army had encamped for weeks, and the skeletons of the tents his captains had occupied. Now, it

actually marched along the road his Majesty had made, and where he had compelled poor Mr. Flad and the other free Europeans to buckle to and assist.

The difficulty of the march consisted entirely in the crossing of the Djedda valley, which involved a descent of three thousand feet, and an ascent of even greater extent. Viewed from the summit of the Wadela plateau, the descent did not look so formidable as it proved to be, as the steepest parts happened to be hid from view; the ascent could hardly have looked more formidable than it was in reality, or have proved more formidable than it looked. Theodore's road was altogether a kingly structure; its august engineer had scorned to adopt the little devices in vogue among the profession for overcoming or avoiding whatever difficulties unkind nature had placed in his way. If rocks could be rolled aside bodily, they had been so rolled aside; if otherwise, they had been cut asunder at an immense sacrifice of time, labour, and powder; but in no instance had they been allowed to interfere with the symmetry of the king's highway. So with hills and every other species of let or hindrance. The result was, that the road was broad, for the most part substantial and good, but in many places so steep as to be precipitous and positively dangerous.

Had Theodorus been on the 4th of April, what he was a few years ago, he would never have allowed a hostile army to ascend the Dalanta plateau; for what might not a determined band have there effected against the largest and best disciplined army? As it was, however, the only spectators of the ascent were a score or two of huge baboons, which watched the proceedings from a close proximity that would have been highly unsafe, had immunity from danger not been secured to them by an order prohibiting all firing now that the army was in the face of the enemy.

So excessively steep were one or two parts of the road as to evoke expressions not of surprise merely, but of dread from those below, as they beheld men, horses, and mules struggling slowly up an incline upon which the slightest accident must have been attended with the most serious consequences. Of the eighteen miles between last camp and the present, eleven were within the banks of the Djedda, and of these eleven, nine were either steep ascent or descent. It was quite dark before the advance guard of the column reached the plateau; the rear-guard and much of the baggage had to remain on the ghaut all night, devoid of shelter, food, or drink. Most of the Beloochees were thirty-six hours without food; yet, whatever signs of exhaustion and fatigue they could not help exhibiting as they marched in, not a word of murmur escaped their lips. Of how many European regiments subjected to half the privation could the same have been said? It may be mentioned that there is a bed of almost pure limestone at the top of the ghaut, from which Theodorus obtained the material for the construction of his furnaces at Debra Tabor. Lime is also quarried in other parts of Dalanta.

Dalanta was found to be more wholly a plain than even Wadela, and seemed to be more highly cultivated. The district was, however, devoid of supplies, having on several occasions been swept of everything by Theodorus. Only a couple of days ago bands of his armed soldiery carried off whatever grain and flour the poor peasants had collected against the arrival of the English army; even the cattle, too, had been driven completely out the district. So the purchases made by the commissariat were for some time very insignificant, consisting chiefly of the husks of wheat and barley. Many of the cavalry horses, not to speak of the mules, had had no grain for nearly two days—a bad look-out in prospect of a hard march, a charge, perhaps a chase, or a few days' continual piquet duty around Magdala.

Captain Speedy was therefore started off, with a suitable escort, to Daoont in quest of flour and barley; but as the peasants of that province had by their active rebellion incurred the king's displeasure equally with those of Dalanta, the probability was that their worldly goods had been appropriated with just as little ceremony or consideration. Besides, even if there was grain in the country, it was known to be hid in the earth, and those who knew where the underground garners were, had fled to other districts, whence they were not likely to return till the storm of war had blown by. Considerable quantities of wheat had luckily been stored for the elephants, saving so much flour for the army; but forty-four tuskers would have required all the wheat in the country to maintain them for one month. And, with a field battery of artillery to transport to Antalo, it was necessary that these animals should be fed, though others should starve.

The latest news from Magdala bore date the 3rd instant. Theodorus had relieved all the captives of their chains, but had given no real indication as to what policy he intended to pursue. His attitude on Islamgee was as warlike as ever, and his camp, as seen from the Beshilo by a reconnoitring party headed by the Commander-in-Chief in person, was imposing enough. There was also no reason to believe that the natural strength of Magdala had been overestimated.

A special letter was received last night, warning the Force to be constantly on its guard against sudden and night attacks, which those in the fortress believed to be in contemplation. Special precautionary measures were, therefore, adopted. The whole of the force on the plain of Dalanta lay down at night booted and spurred, or otherwise ready to turn out under arms before the order to do so should well have been given. The cavalry stood saddled and bridled by night, and by day half of each brigade were in their

tents, their ammunition pouches filled, and their Sniders or Enfields piled before them; the other half were busy in various ways, but all watching for the first note of the bugle call.

A night attack, with so many hundred animals in camp, would have been exceedingly unpleasant, to say the least of it; but even for this the Force was as ready as it was possible for it to be; and officers and men lay down every night declaring what would be the consequence to Theodorus, should he cause them a rude and untimely awakening.

As it was, however, the alarm was groundless. Theodorus was, indeed, preparing an expedition, as Mr. Rassam said, but it was against Daoont, or for looting purposes; not against the English. This, of course, Mr. Rassam had no good means of knowing.

A formal demand was now made by Sir Robert Napier for the immediate and unconditional surrender of the captives. The letter conveying this demand was entrusted to a native, who promised faithfully to carry it to its destination. That demand was couched in the following firm but respectful and moderate terms :—

"By command of the Queen of England, I am approaching Magdala with my army, in order to recover from your hands Envoy Rassam, Consul Cameron, Dr. Blanc, Lieutenant Prideaux, and the other Europeans now in your Majesty's power. I request your Majesty to send them to my camp as soon as it is sufficiently near to admit of their coming in safety." Even supposing the letter to have been delivered with all despatch, there had not yet been time to receive an answer.

Meanwhile the construction of scaling-ladders, bags for holding sand, and various other works suggestive of unpleasant reflections, yet necessary to be provided before a siege or general engagement, was being rigorously prosecuted.

The weather continued good on the whole; though thunder storms, with heavy rain, were of nightly occurrence.

CHAPTER XIX.

DALANTA, *April 8th.*

After the speed with which the Force had been hurried southwards from Antalo, and the accelerated speed which had characterized its movements beyond Lat, people at a distance not unnaturally wondered at the protracted halt that was being made in Dalanta, almost on the very threshold of Magdala. Indeed they were almost driven to suppose there must be something in the air of those elevated regions, inducive of that military manœuvre so often practised by Dalanta generals—watching the enemy. Difficult as respiration was ten thousand feet above the sea, there were more substantial and material reasons for the delay than the mere necessity for a little breathing-space, by which, however, both men and animals were greatly benefited.

Grain and flour are weighty arguments when an army of eight thousand men and two thousand mules has to be fed. The difficulty, too, of rescuing captives from the hands of an astute and desperate man, who, with an army of ten thousand, holds an almost inaccessible fortress situated in a labyrinth of unknown ravines and valleys, must be admitted to deserve consideration. The question of supplies had at length been completely and satisfactorily solved; how the prize might be secured with the least amount of bloodshed and the greatest surety of success, was the problem now being considered.

For its solution a variety of data was necessary, and the collection of accurate data was, under the circumstances, a very difficult matter, and one that required time. Incorrect information in a campaign is often worse than no information at all, tending, as it does, to entrap the most wary generals, and often rendering apparently well-laid plans ruinously disastrous.

The nature of the country around Magdala, coupled with the unconquerable proclivity of the Abyssinians for lying, rendered it unusually difficult to obtain even moderately reliable intelligence regarding those localities which were hid from actual observation, or which were beyond the reach of reconnoitring parties. All the information it had yet been possible to obtain, had been acquired from a distance of nine or ten miles, by means of telescopes and field glasses. Distance may lend enchantment to the view, making trying ascents appear easy, and converting into mere rugged and rocky places cliffs surmountable only by the scaling ladder; yet, even from the Beshilo, it was plain that Magdala, if obstinately defended, could not possibly be taken by a small Force, and that a very large body of infantry alone could prevent Theodore from escaping to the southward if driven from his position on the north. While, therefore, the arrival of the 45th Regiment was anxiously looked for, surveys, measurements, and plans were made with as great rapidity and correctness as circumstances would permit. These four days were far from being wasted; and it was the opinion of not a few, that four days more might have been profitably employed in a similar manner. Yet there were indications of a final move being made soon.

The 45th reached the Dalanta plateau on the afternoon of April 8; on the same day the Punjab Pioneers commenced operations on the Beshilo ghaut; the Beloochees were to join them on the morning of the 9th in the bed of the river, and the first and second brigades were to encamp on the brink of the ravine. A special despatch had been sent off to hurry on the left wing of the Belooch Regiment, which was expected to arrive in a day or two, whereupon the assault of the forts would immediately be made, if it had not been made before. So the end was known not to be far off now. No one was idle enough to indulge in any surmises regard-

ing the disposition of the Force on the day of attack; but it was believed that the 4th King's Own would be the skirmishers. Everybody knew well that if such were the case, and if Colonel Cameron were left to select his own distance for opening fire, that distance would be a very short one. The gallant colonel is not the man to waste Snider ammunition at long ranges.

In connection with the march of the 45th Regiment, and the left wing of the Beloochees under Captain Castell, there was a matter which called forth many severe remarks. Both regiments were anxiously looked for in front, and both were equally eager to arrive there. They had the road before them, such as it was; their kit was the same; and their speed was regulated only by the endurance of men and mules. That the 45th is a splendid regiment no one will deny; that they marched splendidly their arrival at Dalanta to-day testified; but they had twice exhausted their mules, requiring relays of carriage.

The Beloochees, however, had marched even better than the Sherwood Foresters, having gained three days' march on them between Senafe and Dildee, and also two days' march on the 3rd Bombay Infantry; their mules, moreover, were in better condition at Dildee than when they started, and so were the men themselves.

Yet an officer took upon himself, without any authorization from head-quarters, to order the Beloochees to hand over their mules to the again broken-down 45th at Dildee, and to stay there till other mules could be found for them!

A more invidious idea surely never entered any one's head, than to deprive a regiment of the animals they had tended with care, with advantage to themselves and to the public service, that they might be given to another, which had already managed to exhaust two convoys without being able to show much for it. The arrangement never did receive, and never could have received, the Commander-in-Chief's sanction,

—a fact the knowledge of which tended to render the disappointment of the Beloochees less bitter, as they felt that it was not Sir Robert Napier who had turned their assiduity, perseverance, care, and excellent soldierly spirit as a regiment to their direct disadvantage, in favour of a regiment to which they had proved themselves superior in several important respects. If only to compensate for its unjust detention, everybody sincerely hoped the wing might arrive in time to take part in the actual assault and capture of Magdala, as indeed it did.

As a description of Theodore's fortress as first distinctly beheld by the Force, though from a distance of ten or twelve miles, cannot but possess great interest, I shall give a brief outline of its features and appearance under those circumstances. Seen from the right bank of the Beshilo, Magdala appears to be about as far off as the island of Elephanta in Bombay harbour—and how many English readers know that picturesque harbour!—does from Mazagon, or Caranjah, in the same harbour, from the Fort on a foggy day. It is also seen with about the same distinctness; but here all resemblance ceases. The peaks of the Concan will not bear comparison with the Wullo Galla hills which guard the fortress on the east and south; the foreground, too, instead of being a placid sheet of water on which

> ——"the stately ships go on
> To their haven under the hill,"

is a ravine three thousand feet in depth, a tawny and turgid river, and a countless multitude of precipitous and terraced peaks, conspicuous among which the outworks of Amba Magdala raise their defiant front.

With the aid of a good telescope the steep, zig-zig road might be traced from the bottom of the ravine, winding upwards and onwards to the summit of the spur on the western extremity of which stood Fahla, and on the eastern and more

lofty extremity the three positions of Islamgee, Selassie, and Magdala. The amba itself could not be seen, being hid by Selassie. The distance between Fahla and Islamgee had not yet been ascertained correctly; but it was this road, and the trying ascent immediately below Fahla, that Theodore was believed to have made up his mind to defend. He took up his position on the latter hill on April 7, in consequence, it was supposed, of the reconnoissances he had observed being made around it—a move on His Majesty's part which vastly strengthened his position. All along the road his guns might be observed staring rudely at every passer by, their cold murderous-looking eyes speaking of carnage and blood. Yea the Pioneers had heard their fire, though they could not divine its meaning. The fact was, Theodorus had again, *post tot discrimina rerum*, met his friend Rassam, and fired a salute of seven guns in honour of the event.

Underneath the very walls of Islamgee, at this point perfectly inaccessible, three natural scarps, each about fifty feet in height, had apparently to be ascended in order to reach the steep acclivity on whose shelving slopes Theodore had drawn up the flower and strength of his army. Men, tents, huts, and horses could be seen stretching eastwards for more than a mile and a half, even from the western extremity of Fahla, far away round to the eastward of Selassie.

Magdala was thus the third or inner position of a scarped hill, accessible from the north by only one road, without the aid of gigantic scaling ladders; but, the Islamgee plateau occupied, the other two could offer little resistance to a Force well provided with guns, mortars, and rockets.

Behind the amba could be made out the hill of Tanta, by the side of which it was said Theodorus could escape at any moment, if worsted on the north. But where His Majesty could get out, Bill Atkins, it was thought, could perhaps get in; and it was considered not unlikely that a column

would be sent round to advance and seize the gate of Magdala from the rear, while the main body amused the garrison with a feigned attack in front. On Theodore's communication with the captives and retreat being thus cut off, the assault would become vigorous and general. Several officers compared Magdala to a Sattara, with another strong and lofty plateau added.

We had now Theodore's movements open before us; his plans and sentiments had to be arrived at only by inference as before. His army was strongly posted on Fahla and Islamgee, twenty-four guns being in position somewhere, the majority of them on Islamgee. His Majesty had also endeavoured to strengthen his position by making overtures to the queen of the Gallas, offering her his hand, his heart, and a hundred stand of arms, would she only say "Yes" to his suit, and aid him against the English.

Masteeat, however, was hardly likely to pity the sorrows of the lorn monarch, seeing that eternal hate to Theodorus was one of the articles of her family's creed, an oath of hate which had been well kept by her father Amada Beshir, who, though often conquered, died in arms, unsubdued. Her Majesty had also caused Theodorus no small trouble, having of late sent many a bitter pang through his heart by the saucy manner in which she had wrested one or two of his provinces from him, proclaiming herself queen in his stead. Moreover, she had not only rejected Theodorus, but had made proposals to his most bitter and hated enemy and rival Sir Robert Napier, leaving the monarch to "sigh and look" in vain. Sir Robert gallantly reciprocated Her Majesty's feelings, and despatched her co-religionist, Meer Akbar Allee, to foster the union she proposed, and to arrange that the Wullo Gallas should prevent Theodore's escape through or near their country. This hazardous and delicate mission Meer Akbar Allee performed in the most perfect manner.

Letters were received from Magdala on the 8th of April, two days old. The captives were well. Theodore's programme was a sealed letter to them; but few will be surprised to learn that Mr. Rassam very much preferred being rescued from his kind host by 'blarney' as he called it, and leaving him entirely unmolested, to being rescued by powder and shot.

Dejaz Mechecha, with such of the Wakshum's horsemen as were not shot or sabred by the 3rd Light Cavalry, was holding Kuahit amba, eastwards on the Beshilo, in order to prevent Theodore's escape in that direction.

The Advance Force now on the Beshilo consisted of about four thousand fighting men of all arms. Of these, in round numbers, five hundred were artillery, five hundred cavalry, and the remainder infantry.

The health of the troops continued excellent, notwithstanding nightly recurring thunderstorms and heavy rain. On the 8th, hail took the place of rain for a short time, and larger or harder hailstones nobody remembered ever to have seen. They bounded and ricocheted along the ground for a dozen yards or so after falling, much to the annoyance of the animals exposed to their violence.

Damp and wet had induced a tendency to dysentery; yet only twelve of the first brigade were on the sick list. The 12th Bengal Cavalry—a splendid body of men, well mounted—showed a clean sheet such as no other corps in the Force could exhibit. They had not had a single man on the sick list since they left Senafe!

Dr. Steward, B-21st R. A., died at Sindee on April 7th, of dysentery. In connection with the health of the army, it may be remarked that the store of medical comforts was exceedingly limited and of inferior quality. Even the arrowroot, which being prescribed in cases of extreme debility, ought surely to have been pure and unadulterated, bore proofs of having been manufactured for the occasion.

The trail of the contractor was over it too; a large proportion of it was chalk. That it was expressly prepared for the sick, debilitated, and the wounded soldiers in Abyssinia, none could doubt; and hanging was voted too good for its villainous manufacturer, or the contractor who knowingly supplied it.

Badly as matters looked on the arrival of the Force at Dalanta, grain, wheat, flour, and bread were now being purchased in greater quantity than at any other market in Abyssinia. Captain Speedy's mission to Daoont proved entirely successful; the underground granaries, closed against Theodorus, were readily opened, and supplies of all kinds were pouring in, in unprecedentedly large quantities. The purchases of the 7th amounted to 4000 lbs. of flour, 66,500 lbs. of barley, 4,000 lbs. of wheaten bread, and 5,000 lbs. of wheat, besides gram, beans, honey, fowls, eggs, &c. The daily issue of grain amounted to about 30,000 lbs.

Major Goldsworthy, Brigade Major of Cavalry, had, in addition to his own duties, been performing valuable commissariat work in the neighbourhood of the Taccazze and in Wadela, with the second brigade. The supplies brought to the front by him were most timely, and set the Commissariat completely on its legs again.

CHAPTER XX.

BEFORE MAGDALA, *April 14th.*

A period of six days has elapsed between the end of last chapter and the opening of the present. So exceedingly rapid had been the course of events during these six days, and so great the excitement prevailing in camp, that correspondents found it utterly impossible to do more than watch and note the occurrences of the hour. To write was altogether out of the question. This, however, was the less

to be regretted, as they knew that the intelligence transmitted by telegraph would have kept the public informed of the important events that had taken place before Magdala, and of the successful accomplishment of the object of the Expedition. Even now that a few hours of daylight could be devoted to the work of correspondence, in the midst of which one was not likely to be interrupted by receipt of contradictory news from the front, the bugle-call for orders, the booming of cannon, or the thunder of Sniders, it was vain to attempt overtaking arrears in the compass of one letter. The crossing of the Beshilo, the unexpected attack in Arogee valley, the sharp fight, the brilliant victory, the negotiations of next day, the surrender of the captives, the storming and capture of Magdala, Theodore's defence of that stronghold, and his death, supplied incident and detail too interesting and too varied to be compressed into the compass of a single letter.

It may seem, at first sight, that the crossing of the Beshilo, and the march thence to Arogee, might well be dispensed with altogether, or disposed of in half-a-dozen lines, in favour of the more exciting and fresher pabulum behind; but it will be seen that the account is necessary, not merely to convey a correct idea of the movements and position of the troops between Wadela and Magdala, but in order to account for much that occurred afterwards. The reader will shortly see that the crossing of the river by the first and second brigades, and the advance of the former to the scene of the engagement that ensued, constitute no mere preface to the fight—the more serious work of the day, but form an integral though accidental part of it.

Early on the morning of Good Friday, the first brigade, under the command of Brigadier General Schneider, and accompanied by Major General Sir Charles Staveley, left the camp on the heights of Dalanta, where it had spent a miserable night in mud and rain, and commenced the

descent into the Beshilo ravine. Again Theodore's enemies profited by his labour, finding a road which required comparatively little to render it all that was necessary.

The right bank of the ravine is equally as steep as those of the Djedda, and about 3,400 feet deep; but it must have presented less difficulty to his Majesty than the descent from Wadela had done. Instead of having to hew his way through rocks of extreme hardness, or to avoid them by dangerously steep gradients, he had in this case only rotten basalt to deal with. Spade and pickaxe, if the kit of the Abyssinian pioneer includes such implements, alone were necessary to throw aside the already semi-detached columns of the formation. The Pioneers, therefore, found the road broad and tolerably good in the first instance, and a few hours' work served to fill up the tracks left by Theodore's mortars, to make a gradient less steep, or a turning less acute.

By eight o'clock the brigade had reached the river, which late heavy rains had swelled to respectable dimensions—three hundred feet across by three or four feet deep. Ford there was none; so, divesting themselves of nether garments, the soldiers sprang merrily into the tawny waters, and waded through in something approaching martial order, although the smooth round stones in the river's bed rendered complete steadiness in the ranks exceedingly difficult of attainment. Toilets adjusted on the other side, a start was immediately made for the camping ground among the hills beyond—the last camp before the assault on Magdala.

The route to be followed by this brigade lay over hills and cliffs rendered almost impassable by a superabundance of rock and jungle altogether Abyssinian. Indeed the climbing and scrambling were such as had never been equalled in all our experience in the country, extensive as that undeniably was. Not that it was absolutely necessary to

adopt this difficult route, for a level and easy road led up the valley, even unto the base of Fahla. But it was considered advisable to turn this Pass, and have it securely held, before allowing mules with ammunition and baggage to proceed along it—a precaution of which subsequent events showed the wisdom.

Colonel Phayre had been despatched beforehand with six companies of Bombay and Madras Sappers and Miners to select a site for the camp—which site was to be beyond the range of the guns on Fahla—and to hold the Pass, sending intimation to Sir Robert Napier as soon as the latter part of his instructions had been complied with. Thereupon it was intended that the Naval Rocket Brigade, Colonel Penn's Mountain Battery, and the baggage train of the first brigade should proceed along the low road, safe from attack or molestation.

At ten o'clock on the same day, the second brigade, under General Wilby, and accompanied by the Commander-in-Chief and head-quarters, left the Wadela plateau, reaching the bottom of the ravine about noon. There Sir Robert anxiously awaited the missive from his lieutenant which should allow the batteries and baggage to proceed; for the black masses of cloud overhanging the mountain tops like a pall, the roll of the thunder, and the pelting rain, proclaimed the near approach of darkness.

Meanwhile, the 4th King's Own, the Royal Engineers, the Punjab Pioneers, two companies of the 10th Native Infantry, and a troop of Light Cavalry had been slowly but surely making their way to the summit of the first range of hills over which they had to pass. Arrived there, the column halted for half an hour to breathe, and to refresh themselves with the muddy water they had providently secured in the Beshilo. While resting thus, an officer came up to Sir Charles Staveley with a message from Colonel Phayre, to the effect that the head of the Pass was

held by him, in accordance with the instructions he had received, and that the batteries and baggage might now be allowed to proceed. Sir Charles lost no time in transmitting the intelligence to Sir Robert Napier, not doubting but that matters were as Colonel Phayre stated.

When the officer from Sir Charles Staveley reached the Beshilo and delivered the message to the Commander-in-Chief, His Excellency, having given the order for the batteries to advance under Colonel Milward, rode on by the hill track, in order to ascertain for himself what had been done in front and to superintend arrangements for the night, intending to return to the Beshilo till the morning. Indeed his camp had been already pitched there.

But this, and other plans of His Excellency's, were destined never to be put into execution, for a series of blunders had been committed through a reckless, self-sufficient neglect of orders—blunders which might have cost the army dear. The pass was not held—indeed the Sappers who ought to have been holding it were nowhere visible from its head; the camping ground selected was not a defensible position, and it was within range of Theodore's guns! Both Sir Robert Napier and Sir Charles Staveley could see at a glance that Colonel Phayre 'had blundered'; Theodorus saw it too, and in his jubilant moments already harangued his men, speaking to them of pillage and slaughter. 'Go down,' said he, 'my children and take possession of your prey; this gold embroidered kingly robe of mine will be a thing of small value compared to the prizes carried by those mules.' But, luckily, there was yet time to prevent the consequences of the blunder, imminent as they were. How imminent the consequences were, may be gathered from the fact that seven guns on Fahla were ready for action, already the matches were glimmering over them. Presently they opened fire, about four o'clock in the afternoon, their fire being directed at the group around

the Commander-in-Chief, and at the Punjab Pioneers. Simultaneously with this, crowds of armed men, horsemen, and spearmen, and musketeers, poured down from the mountain, along the Arogee spur, straight for the head of the ravine. Up this ravine the two batteries and the baggage of the brigade were advancing, unprotected except by the baggage guard. The Naval Brigade, which had just emerged from the head of the ravine, was ordered to hurry up to the commanding position on which Sir Robert was, and instructions were sent to Major Chamberlain, to move his regiment away to the left, so as to prevent the approaching foe from entering the Pass. The fear now was lest the Abyssinians should reach and attack the Naval Brigade before the infantry could be hurried up to stem the rapidly advancing wave. Aide-de-camps had been sent back to hurry up the infantry, which lost not a moment in obeying the summons; but even seconds seemed long at such a crisis.

Exhausted and half dead as the men were from hunger, thirst, and toil, it was fighting at last; the report of that gun from Fahla inspired them with fresh vigour, and on they came at the double, their step as elastic as if they knew not what a day's hard marching was. Great coats and blankets had been thrown aside; the 4th King's Own led the way down the hill, two companies in skirmishing order; then came the 10th Company of Royal Engineers, two or three companies of the 10th N. I., the Beloochees, and the Bombay and Madras Sappers and Miners.

Meanwhile the Rocket Battery had been hurried up, the tubes hastily dismounted and put in position, and their novel projectiles were now whizzing in showers among the enemy. The Naval Brigade was the first to reply to Theodore's challenge, and great was the cheering on all sides when the first rocket winged its way over the heads of the 4th and other advancing regiments,

spreading consternation among the Abyssinian crowd. Yet on the enemy came, pluckily and bravely, their chiefs inciting them both by precept and example.

On they came, and forward went Colonel Cameron and his men to meet them, till the two lines were within a hundred and fifty yards of each other. Then the 4th, having reached the summit of the Arogee slope, opened with their Sniders. That devilish fire made Theodore's veterans tremble from one end of the line to the other; they returned it as best they could; but the leaden storm was too much for them; they could not stand before it. Yet there was no flight; they retreated sullenly, firing the while; and, taking advantage of any bush or rock which might form a sort of stockade, made the most of their hopeless position. Once they tried to turn the flank of the 4th, but Colonel Cameron wheeled a company to the right, and these, with the Engineers and Beloochees, drove the Abyssinians back.

By this time the King's Own held the road which led up the steep acclivity of Fahla to Islamgee and Magdala, rendering the return of the Abyssinians to the fortress impossible. The Rocket Battery had been brought close up, and the discomfited hordes were driven far away to their right, having to seek shelter as best they could among the hills and glens to the north-east. But morning showed that there was no real shelter for them there; the Gallas were swarming on every hill side, thirsting for their blood. So they had no help but to retrace their steps to Magdala during the next day.

While the fight was raging in the valley below, Theodore's artillery on Fahla had been maintaining a constant fire on the advancing British line from above, but, whether from the great height of the hill and the construction of the guns, or from overcharges of powder, the shots, which were well lined, carried too far, and

generally plunged into the earth a hundred yards or so in rear of the line.

Meanwhile, also, a still hotter fight had been in progress on the left. Thither the main body of the enemy had gone, hoping to secure the baggage without serious opposition. But they had made the terrible mistake of laying hold of the scorpion by its tail, and dearly they had to pay for the blunder. The mules which had come up and taken their places near the Punjabees, were not laden with treasure as they supposed; they bore Colonel Penn's Mountain Battery of steel rifled guns, which had followed the Naval Brigade. As quick as thought each piece was in position, and, loaded with shell, awaited the nearer approach of the foe. Now they were within three hundred yards, and the "Steel Penns" opened in right good earnest. Major Chamberlain, too, let loose his heroes. This stayed the onward advance of the crowd for a little, and they diverged to the left, making for a ravine branching off the main road, where all the baggage was huddled together, warned to stop by the firing in front. Even there, there was a warm reception awaiting them. Immediately Sniders in front of them "volleyed and thundered." The baggage guard had been collected by Lieutenant Abadie, of the 11th Hussars, doing duty with the Transport Train, and under the command of Captain Roberts of the 4th King's Own, was already panting to open fire. With Captain Roberts, or doing excellent work elsewhere in the ravine, were Lieuts. Sweny, Irvine, and Durrant of the same regiment.

While the baggage guard checked the progress of the enemy in front, a company of Punjabees fell upon their flank; Colonel Milward, too, had sent a couple of Penn's guns forward, and these literally mowed down the wretches in scores, fighting desperately all the while. The Punjabees, tired of using the ramrod at such close quarters, fixed bayonets and charged in splendid

style, driving their opponents into groups which formed admirable marks for the mountain guns. The weapon with which the Punjabees were armed was also inferior to the double-barrelled gun of the Abyssinians; hence the wisdom of having recourse to the bayonet. About this time, so general was the engagement all along the Arogee plateau, rockets and shell whizzing and hurtling on all sides, and Sniders maintaining a terrible fire both on the right and left, that many old soldiers declared they had seen actions between well-equipped armies less vigorously sustained.

The fight had now lasted over an hour, yet the carnage was as great as ever. Five hundred of Theodore's best troops had fallen, thousands had been wounded, his chiefs were dead, his army was driven away from the fortress, and darkness was coming on. The order was therefore given to the troops to cease firing, and to return to the elevated ground they had left before the battle began. Had another hour of daylight remained, Magdala had probably been ours that night. A ringing cheer from the conquerors, and a shower of rockets at the guns on Fahla, brought the determined and bloody conflict to a close. It should be mentioned that, soon after the commencement of the engagement, a well directed rocket sped by within a few feet of Theodore, as he was superintending his guns on Fahla; he knew by that time that the day was lost, and 'Would to God,' said he, 'it had gone through my head.'

It rained heavily as the troops retired; all were wet to the skin. Greatcoats, water-proof sheets, and blankets had been left behind; and karkee is far from being impervious to wet. The first brigade occupied that night the ground held by the Punjabees, so as to protect the baggage, which was still in the ravine. In the morning, part remained there, to await the arrival of the second brigade,

part moved to another and stronger position where they had halted the night before.

Viewed next morning, the Arogee valley was full of those sickening scenes which are inseparably associated with the idea of a battle-field. Here, both levelled at the same moment, if not by the same ball, lay the horse and his rider; there, the one had been taken and the other left. How truthful the picture :—

> "The war horse masterless is on the earth,
> "And that last gasp hath burst his bloody girth ;
> "And near, yet quivering with what life remained,
> "The heel that urged him, and the hand that reined."

Deep stains of blood marked the track of the wounded as their last faint effort had been expended in the attempt to reach the amba and live, or to gain the shelter of a friendly bush, there, Stoic-like, to die. Feetourare Gavrie, Theodore's Commander-in-Chief, and the most valiant man in his army, could be distinguished from among the other fallen knights by the splendour of his attire. All could recognize at once the gaudy shirt which had been the oriflamme of the Abyssinian hordes the night before, causing its wearer to be mistaken for Theodore himself, and making him the mark for many a bullet. Gavrie was among the first to fall on the right. Seven knights who followed him, and who attempted to carry off his body, were laid in a heap around him. Surely it was better that the valiant and generous, if any such there were in the army of Theodorus, should fall early in the fray, rather than live to be stung with the taunts of their master, or to mourn over the misfortunes of the three days that followed.

On the left, where the Pioneers and baggage guard had been at work, the dead lay thickest. Along the ravine where the bayonet charge was made, men and horses were heaped in tens and twenties. In some cases sword and bayonet had finished what the bullet had left but half

done; all that lay there had been dead a long time before the morning. On the right, where the firing had been at longer ranges, the tale of dead was not so great, and more wounded men lay around, awaiting without murmur or repine the approaching termination of their sufferings.

It was impossible not to feel compassion for the poor wretches, they certainly never owed the English a grudge; and their bravery proved their claim to sympathy—a claim which was not disregarded. Many a dying man was turned to ease his pain, and many a flask was emptied to its precious contents at the dumb request of some fevered lip or parched tongue, mutely praying for

"One drop, the last, to cool it for the grave."

In addition to those that lay there, hundreds had been carried away into the amba during the night. The rockets and shell left abundant testimony that the consternation and dismay they had caused among the Abyssinians were far from groundless. Many a charred mass and mangled heap showed how terrible was the havoc, how awful the death, they carried wherever they sped. Before a week elapsed the sleek wolves and greedy vultures deprived the field of much of its horror, giving it the appearance which it will long retain—a place of skulls.

CHAPTER XXI.

BEFORE MAGDÀLA, *April 14th.*

The second brigade, which was to have remained on the Beshilo till the morning of April 11, was summoned to the front when the sortie was made; but the battle was won and night over all before it arrived.

A more miserable night than that was, it would be difficult to conceive. Most of the regiments had been without food or water since daylight, had been marching

or fighting all the time, and saw no prospect of relief till the morning. Yet not a grumble could be heard from one end of the bivouac to the other; the men lay down on the cold damp ground, in wet clothes, and awaited patiently the rise of the moon, when they knew an attempt would be made to find water in the adjoining ravine, or till the daystar should arise, when it might be possible to procure breakfast. Many might be seen licking the damp stones as they lay on the ground, in the vain attempt to quench or alleviate their burning thirst. The knowledge that water could not be had, rendered thirst even more intolerable.

The lightning's flash, and the glare of torches on the hills of Islamgee and Selassie above, showed that all was excitement and bustle there. Theodore had left his seven guns on Fahla, whither his soldiers would not return to fetch them; so the position of several others had to be changed, in order the more effectually to command the road.

But, great as were the preparations for a renewal of the combat made during the night on Islamgee, and stern as was the edict forbidding all manifestation of grief, Theodore could not hide from himself the fact that he had now to do with a stronger than he, and that he had that afternoon heard the din of battle for the first time. The Sniders and the Steel Penns had completely cowed him, and he betook himself to the houses of the captives to speak of reconciliation. Yet, severely punished and humbled as he had been, he never for one moment dreamed of any further departure from his proud position as 'king of kings,' &c. than to enter into alliance with his conquerors. Submission or surrender was a depth of misfortune and ignominy from which his pride revolted—pride which cost him his life.

The account given by Theodore's valet of the manner in which his master passed the night after the battle, is at

once interesting and affecting. His Majesty could not hide from himself the fact that he had been completely defeated, but it was only by degrees that he realized the hopelessness of his position, and what defeat had cost him. When the miserable fragment of his army—scarcely a tenth part—returned after the fight, his soul thirsted for news. He knew the terrible fact, and he wanted to know the why and wherefore. Perhaps he hoped his chiefs could tell him that matters were not so utterly bad as they seemed.

"Where," he asked, "is Feetourare Gavrie?"; but no one dared to reply.

"Send me Feetourare Gavrie," repeated his Majesty several times, and at last a soldier mustered courage to tell him the truth—"Feetourare Gavrie is dead."

"You lie," exclaimed the proud but despairing monarch, shuddering to believe the truth, "he is merely "wounded, and must have gone, like a dutiful husband, to "calm his wife's fears."

"Where is Baal Amba Ras Birroo?"

"Neither has he returned," was the hesitating reply.

"What, has he too deserted me? Bring me arracky, for I faint. If Baal Amba Ras Birroo has not played me false, summon him hither."

Little dreamed his Majesty that his too faithful chieftain was then lying in the English field hospital dying. Finding also that his summoning of Dejaz Garra Yessoo, Dejaz Tuklie, Basha Engeda, and other leading warriors evoked the same terrible response—"Dead," he made an attempt to shoot himself, but was prevented by Basha Asenyeh from accomplishing his purpose.

Then amidst imprecations on all and sundry for allowing him to remain under the delusion which had ruined him—the delusion that the English would not, and could not, fight with him, he declared his kingdom lost unless steps

were taken at once and successfully to save it. In his need he bethought himself of appealing for advice and assistance to the Europeans. Dr. Blanc, to whom the public have been repeatedly indebted for interesting accounts from Magdala, says:—

"Early on the morning of the 10th his Majesty sent us word to get ready to return to Magdala. Shortly afterwards one of his servants brought us the following message:—'Who is that woman that sends her soldiers to fight against a king? Send no more messengers to your people; if a single servant of yours is missing, the covenant of friendship between you and myself is broken.' A few minutes afterwards a boy that some days previously I had sent to General Merewether with a request that a letter be sent to Theodore, as he had on several occasions manifested great astonishment at not receiving any communication from the army, returned with a letter from His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief for the Emperor. The letter was perfect, just what we had wished for—firm, courteous, no threats, no promises, except that he would be honourably treated if he delivered the prisoners uninjured into his hands. At once we sent Samuel to inform his Majesty that a letter from Sir R. Napier had arrived for him. His Majesty declined to receive it. 'It is of no use,' he said, 'I know what I have to do.' However, shortly afterwards he sent for Samuel privately, asking him for the contents, and as Samuel had translated it he informed him of the principal points. His Majesty listened attentively, but made no remarks. A mule from the Imperial stables was sent for Mr. Rassam to ride; Lieutenant Prideaux, Captain Cameron, and myself were told that we might ride our own mules, but this favour was denied to the other captives. On our return to Magdala we were hailed by our servants, and the few friends we had on the mountain, as men that had returned from the grave. We sent for our tents, bedding, &c., and awaited with anxiety the next move of the fickle despot.

"About noon the whole of the garrison of the amba were told to arm and proceed to the King's camp, a few old men only and the ordinary prisoners' guard remaining on the mountain. Between 3 and 4 P.M. a violent thunder storm burst over the amba. We thought at times that we could distinguish amidst the peals of thunder distant guns and some close at hand. At other times we were almost certain that the sound we had just heard was a

volley, but we only laughed at the idea, and only wondered how the echoes of the almost constant thunder could to our excited imagination bear such close resemblance to the welcome music of an attack by the army of rescue. Shortly after 4 P. M. the storm subsided, and then no mistake was any more possible. The deep dull sound of guns, the sharp report of small arms, now now reached us plainly and distinctly. But what was it? No one would or could say. Twice during the next hour the joyous 'lilalli' resounded from Islamgee to the amba above, where it was taken up by the soldiers' families. Then all doubts vanished; evidently the King was only 'fakering'; no fight had taken place, as no 'lilalli' would be heard if Theodore had ventured to encounter the British troops.

"We were fast asleep, quite unaware of the glorious battle that had taken place a few miles from our prision, when we were aroused by a servant, who told us to dress quickly, and come over to Mr. Rassam's house as messengers had just arrived from his Majesty. We found on entering Mr. Rassam's room Messrs. Waldemair and Flad, and several of the Emperor's chiefs, who had come up to deliver the Imperial message. Then for the first time we heard of the battle of Fahla, heard, indeed, that we were now safe, that the humbled despot had acknowledged the greatness of the power he had for years despised. The Imperial message was as follows:—'I thought that the people that are now coming were women, I now find that they are men. I have been conquered by the advance guard alone. All my gunners are dead: reconcile me with your people.'; . . .

"Returning to the King's tent Messrs. Flad and Waldemair informed him of their arrival by one of the eunuchs who had accompanied them for that purpose. It appears that in the meanwhile his Majesty had been drinking hard; he came out of his tent very excited, and asked the Europeans, 'What do you want?' They told him that as he had commanded them they had spoken on his behalf to Mr. Rassam, and that that gentleman had proposed sending Mr. Prideaux, &c. &c. His Majesty interrupted them, and in an angry tone exclaimed, 'Mind your own business; go to your tents!' The two Europeans stood still in the hope that his Majesty might change his mind, but seeing that they did not depart, he got into a rage, and in a high tone of voice ordered them to retire at once.

"At about 4 A.M. a messenger was sent by his Majesty to call

Messrs. Flad and Waldemair before him. As soon as they arrived he said, 'Do you hear this wailing? There is not a soldier who has not lost a friend or a brother. What will it be when the whole army comes? What shall I do? counsel me.' Mr. Waldemair told him: 'Your Majesty, peace is the best.' 'And you, Flad, what do you say?' 'Your Majesty,' replied Mr. Flad, 'ought to accept Mr. Rassam's proposal.' His Majesty remained a few minutes silent, his head between his hands, apparenrly in deep thought, and then said, 'Well, go back to Magdala, and tell Mr. Rassam that I trust in his friendship to reconcile me with his people. I will do what he thinks best.' Mr. Flad brought us this message, Mr. Waldemair remaining with the Emperor. At daybreak, together with Dijajalani, Lieutenant Prideaux and Mr. Flad started for the English camp, bearers of a message for his Excellency Sir Robert Napier."

When, therefore, the morning of the 11th dawned, it found the English occupying two strong positions close under the fortress, anxious for another and final brush with the brave army whose acquaintance they had not had sufficient time to cultivate the night before. Theodorus, on the other hand, was organizing an embassy to convey assurances of his friendship to Sir Robert Napier. As the Beloochees were crawling up the hill in skirmishing order, there to await events, a small party of horsemen was seen to descend from Magdala and wend its way towards the English camp. With the aid of a good glass a white flag of truce might be descried fluttering at its head, and the uniform of a British officer in the crowd. The news spread like wildfire, and before the group had well descended from the hill, the road between the outlying piquets and the Head-quarter camp was lined with spectators, all anxious to hear the news.

Nor was Lieutenant Prideaux, for it was he, at all reticent regarding the secrets of his prison house. Cheer after cheer burst from all quarters of the camp, the enthusiasm becoming unbounded when General Merewether and others of their friends met them and gave them warm greeting. It

soon transpired that Lieutenant Prideaux, accompanied by Mr. Flad and one or two Abyssinian grandees, had come to enquire on what terms friendship might be cemented between his Majesty and the English. After an hour or so they returned with the answer that Theodorus must give up every European captive in Magdala, and submit himself to the Queen of England, being guaranteed only honourable treatment for himself and family.

In the afternoon the same embassy returned, bearing the following letter from Kassa—not from Theodorus, the anointed King. It was without superscription, seal, signature, or date; and along with it was returned Sir Robert Napier's letter of that morning, in which he called upon the King to surrender himself and the captives:—

"In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God in His Trinity and His Unity, Kassa, whose trust in Christ, thus speaks: O people of Abyssinia, will it always be thus that you flee before the enemy, when I myself, by the power of God, go not forth with you to encourage you? Believing that all power had been given to me, I had established my Christian people in this heathen spot. In my city are multitudes whom I have fed; maidens protected and maidens unprotected; women whom yesterday made widows; and aged parents who have no children. God has given you the power. See that you forsake not these people. It is a heathen land. My countrymen have turned their backs on me and have hated me because I imposed tribute on them, and sought to bring them under military discipline. You have prevailed against me by means of people brought into a state of discipline. My followers who loved me were frightened by one bullet, and fled in spite of my commands. When you defeated them I was not with the fugitives. Believing myself to be a great lord I gave you battle: but, by reason of the worthlessness of my artillery, all my pains were as naught. The people of my country by taunting me with having embraced the religion of the Franks, and by saying that I had become a Mussalman, and in ten different ways, had provoked me to anger against them. Out of what I have done of evil towards them may God bring good. His will be done, I had intended, if God had so decreed, to conquer the whole

world ; and it was my desire to die if my purpose could not be fulfilled. Since the day of my birth till now no man has dared to lay hand on me. Whenever my soldiers began to waver in battle it was mine to arise and rally them. Last night the darkness hindered me from doing so. Your people who have passed the night in joy, may God not do unto you as he has done to me. I had hoped, after subduing all my enemies in Abyssinia, to lead my army against Jerusalem, and expel from it the Turks. A warrior who has dandled strong men in his arms like infants, will never suffer himself to be dandled in the arms of others."

It was an anxious hour for Sir Robert Napier, upon whose decision the lives of all the captives seemed to depend. It was hard to leave countrymen to what seemed certain massacre; but there was no alternative between that and accepting the conditions imposed by the vanquished savage. So Sir Robert played the Roman, and Prideaux and Flad returned to the king without an answer. Sad was the parting, for they themselves and every one else believed that they were taking a last farewell of the English camp, and had tasted as much of liberty as it was their fate ever to enjoy. His Majesty had also sent a present of a thousand cattle to the Commander-in-Chief, but the sentries were ordered to keep them without the piquets; short of the captives nothing whatever would be accepted. The prevailing sorrow was soon, however, to be turned into universal joy.

One of the chiefs who had been in the English camp had strongly represented to the king the folly of attempting to contend longer, and assured him that nothing but annihilation awaited any army that might take the field against the Force now at his gates. Hoping for terms, his Majesty had, during the embassy's absence, sent for Mr. Rassam and the rest, and told them to go; so meeting Lieutenant Prideaux and Mr. Flad by the way, they all returned together. Mrs. Flad being unable to undertake the journey that night, remained, as also did the families

of several of the German artizans. On the morning of Easter Sunday, a palanquin was sent up to fetch the lady down, and by the time congregations in India were singing their Easter hymn, sounds of unmingled joy and rejoicing arose from the English camp before Magdala. Every one of the captives was safe and well—all of them to the number of sixty-one being unconditionally surrendered by the tyrant.

The following complete list of the captives, given up by Theodorus, can never be devoid of interest:—

Consul Cameron.
Mr. Rassam.
Mr. and Mrs. Flad, and 3 children.
Lieut. Prideaux, Bombay Army.
Dr. Blanc, ,, ,,
Rev. Mr. Stern.
Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal and child.
Mr. Kerens.
Signor Pietro (Italian), Consul Cameron's servant.
Mr. Staiger, German Missionary, sent by a Scotch Society.
Mr. Brandeis, do. do.
Mr. Essler, German naturalist.
Mr. Schiller, do. do.
M. Makerer (Frenchman), servant originally of Consul Cameron, latterly of Theodore.
Mr. Zander, German artizan, native wife and 4 children.
Mr. Waldemair, Swiss, as above.
Mrs. Waldemair (the late Mr. Bell's daughter) and child.
Mr. Saalmuller, German artizan.
Mrs. Saalmuller, (daughter of Mr. Bell), and child.
Aleegas, son of the late Mr. Bell, an artizan.
Mr. Bender (German), wife, and 3 children.
Mrs. Kenglen, widow of German artizan, and one child.
Mr. Moritz Hall.

Mr. Mayer, German artizan, wife and 3 children.
M. Bourgond, French artizan, French wife, and 5 children.
Mr. Shimfer, German, geographer.
Mr. Shimfer, junior, artizan.
Mr. McKelvie, Irishman, servant of Consul Cameron.
Mr. Parkins, artizan.
M. Bardel (French), Theodore's friend.

Now, he thought, he had drank the last draught of humiliation, and would be spared compliance with the latter half of the demand that had been made upon him. Strong in this hope he wrote the following very civil letter to the Commander-in-Chief, apologising for his rudeness the day before, confiding to him how miraculously and mercifully God had preserved him from committing suicide, and signing and sealing the letter with the royal seal :—

"In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God : The King of the Kings, Theodorus : May it reach the beloved servant of the great Queen of England. I am writing to you without being able to address you by name, because our intercourse has arisen so unexpectedly. I am grieved at having sent you my writing of yesterday, and at having quarrelled with you, my friend. When I saw your manner of fighting, and the discipline of your army, and when my people failed to execute my orders, then I was consumed with sorrow to think that although I killed and punished my soldiers, yet they would not return to the battle. Whilst the fire of jealousy burned within me, Satan came to me in the night and tempted me to kill myself with my own pistol. But reflecting that God would be angry with me if I were to go in this manner and leave my army without a protector, I sent to you in a hurry lest I might die and all things be in confusion before my message should reach you. After my messenger had gone, I cocked my pistol, and putting it in my mouth, pulled the trigger. Though I pulled and pulled yet it would not go off. But when my people rushed upon me, and laid hold of the pistol, it was discharged just as they had drawn it from my mouth. God having thus signified to me that I should not die but live, I sent to you Mr. Rassam that same evening, that your heart might be made

easy. To-day is Easter, be pleased to let me send a few cows to you. The reason of my returning to you your letter yesterday was that I believed at that time that we should meet one another in heaven, but never on earth. I let the night pass without sending for the body of my friend Feetourare Gavrie, because I thought that after my death we would both be buried together ; but, since I have lived, be pleased to allow him to be buried. You require from me all the Europeans, even to my best friend, Mr. Waldemair. Well, be it so. They shall go. But now that we are friends you must not leave me without artisans, as I am a lover of the mechanical arts."

To Sir Robert Napier the above letters appeared to contain nothing which was calculated to induce him to modify the resolution he had formed of insisting at all hazards on Theodore's surrender. On the contrary, they rather confirmed the impression that the King identified the idea of friendship of the English Forces with that of support against his enemies. "It is also necessary," remarks the Commander-in-Chief,

"if we would avoid acquiring from the perusal of these letters an erroneous conception of Theodore's disposition, to read them less in the light of the language which he holds in them than in that of the actions and tenor of his past life. Thus it will not be forgotten that, while they were being written, the mangled remains of at least 200 of his countrymen who had been butchered by his order, and some of them with his own hand, were exposed to view at the bottom of the rock from which they had been thrown. The treacherous manner in which, only a few days before the appearance of our army, he plundered the peasants of the districts round Magdala, who, trusting to his solemn promise of protection, had always been faithful to him, may be taken as a further illustration of the late King's real character."

In place of the remission Theodore expected, twenty-four hours were given him in which to surrender himself and his all to her Majesty, or be shelled out of his fortress before another sun arose behind it. Now he saw, when it was too late, the mistake he had made in letting the children of England go : he had not another

card in his hand worth playing ; there was *nothing* for *him* now but captivity or death. The general impression was that his Majesty was a coward and a cur, and that he would surrender before the day of grace expired ; few thought that they should enter Magdala on the morrow over the dead body of Theodorus.

At the morning and evening services in camp on Easter Sunday, appropriate reference was of course made to the joyous events which had been taking place. There was no pomp of ceremony or harmonious chanting, but round a well-battered drum, in worn and ragged garments, with unshorn beards and faces brown from wind and sun, stood a few regiments of British troops. Frowning darkly above was the barbaric fortress whose natural scarped rocks had given to its savage owner much of his power for tyranny, and from which the long line of liberated captives had hardly ceased to string. Few and short were the prayers and meagre was the service ; but every word seemed to us, as we stood on that bleak mountain plain, to be fraught with deepest meaning, and the few words spoken by Mr. Stern, one of those who had lived a living death for three years in the grip of the tyrant, fell on the ear with deep pathos, as he spoke of the resurrection and the life.

The captives cannot be said to have borne very many traces of their long confinement. Captain Cameron was sadly broken down, but mended considerably after his arrival in camp. In spite of the intense and increasing anxiety they must have endured for years, a few grey hairs seemed to be the only souvenirs they had brought with them from Magdala. The Germans were, however, taking back to Fatherland souvenirs of another kind—*beautiful* Abyssinian wives and quivers full of children, *the latter* as robust and noisy as any over whom the *brawling* Rhine throws its spray.

The dangerous, important, and romantic mission of Meer Akbar Allee to the Wullo Gallas did not lose much of its interest, though there was no chance of their services being required to intercept Theodorus. It is only due to Meer Akbar Allee and to the Gallas themselves, to state that the mission was entirely successful. A pompous reception, gorgeous fêtes, and costly presents it was not in their power to give him; but they received our envoy with greatest enthusiasm, and brought from their hiding-places among the rocks such presents as they could afford—barley, flour, fish, and honey. One fort was holding out for Theodorus, and from it they had cut off all supplies, being determined to starve the nest of vipers into surrender; and nothing that they could do would be too much for them, if only they could show their good-will to the English, and their hatred of an hereditary foe.

On the night after the battle of Arogee, the news of which fugitives had carried through the country, some twenty Gallas chiefs, each carrying a bundle of straw, came into camp, and begged the Commander-in-Chief's acceptance of these, which they had scraped together for him from the wreck left by the cruel Negus; their brothers also came, each bringing a bag of grain, and their cousins with a goat a-piece.

That the districts around Magdala had been laid waste within the past few weeks there could be no doubt. A few days before, we saw villages in flames on all sides, each kindled by order of Theodorus—

> "And he smiled a smile more dreadful
> "Than his own dreadful frown,
> "When he saw the thick, black cloud of smoke
> "Go up from the plundered town."

History heeds not the advice—*De Mortuis nil nisi bonum.* As long as Theodore's name is remembered, so long will those who saw his slaughter-house on Easter Monday

curse his memory as that of a cruel and savage man, who never looked on a fair province without blighting it, and whose soul delighted only in shedding innocent blood. In a heap at the bottom of a precipice down which they had been hurled, lay the bodies of three hundred and eight Gallas chiefs whom Theodore killed with his own hand a few days before, or caused to be broken on the rocks below. There they lay, chained hand and foot as they had left their dungeon, a ghastly heap which none who saw can ever forget, or for humanity's sake cease to bless the hour which saw the tyrant and murderer turn his bloody hand against himself, and rush unbidden into the presence of his Maker.

CHAPTER XXII.

BEFORE MAGDALA, *April 16th.*

Easter Monday, that day sacred to military display in England, saw the campaign in Abyssinia brought to a glorious termination; indeed it is not unreasonable to believe that when the volunteer brigades at home were thundering, with all the pomp and circumstances of war, against some imaginary stronghold on Portsdown Hill, British cannon were at work in good earnest, and British soldiers gallantly mounting the breach, at the storming of an all but impregnable fortress four hundred miles into the interior of Africa.

Theodorus had at last surrendered all the European captives in his hands, trusting in no small measure, perhaps, to the promises of Mr. Rassam to effect a reconciliation between him and the English, and to procure the withdrawal of the further demand from which his inmost soul revolted—that he should submit himself to the Queen of England.

Of course it may never be fully known what passed between the King and some of the captives on the night of the 11th instant, when, completely cowed by the defeat he had sustained, his Majesty trembled for all that he valued in this world or the next. That he considered Mr. Rassam to be a man of unbounded influence, the finest gentleman in England in fact, there is no room to doubt; consequently it is not unnatural that he should have leaned with confidence upon any promise our envoy may have made, to induce Sir Robert Napier to moderate his demands. It was said, indeed, though with what truth it was difficult to ascertain, that Theodorus, finding how grievously he had been outmanœuvred notwithstanding his cunning, heaped imprecations upon Mr. Rassam's head, and almost with his dying breath cursed the man to whose good offices he had trusted in vain. This will remain an unwritten chapter in the history of the Abyssinian campaign; but who shall say that any one of the captives was to blame for assuring the King that when restored to liberty, he would do all in his power to procure him the friendship and assistance of the English army? Mr. Rassam and the others knew well enough that any representation from them would be futile and impertinent; but they would have been fools indeed had they told his Majesty so.

Everything that could be done was done, as we have seen, to induce Theodorus to surrender without a renewal of actual hostilities. The Commander-in-Chief wrote him a kind and flattering letter, telling him that he had fought like a brave man, and, like a brave man, was defending his fortress, but had been beaten by the superior power of England. His Excellency assured him he had no wish for further bloodshed, and guaranteed his Majesty honourable treatment for himself and family should he surrender. With such a letter from the servant of a woman, the madman was

highly displeased; surrender he never would; he would rather be hunted like a partridge among the mountains.

Full of this resolve he called upon his chiefs to follow him, shooting two of the principal of them *pour encourager les autres*, and rode out from Magdala. Only about fifty went forth with him; the remainder immediately put themselves in communication with the British camp, acquainting Sir Robert Napier of their King's departure, and offering to surrender Fahla, Selassie, and Islamgee.

His Excellency immediately despatched a messenger to Meer Akbar Allee, who had all the Gallas up and on the watch for Theodore, offering one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for Theodore's head, and a handsome reward to whoever should bring the tidings of his capture. Preparations were also made to march into Magdala that morning. On the way up, news was received that Theodore, finding the Gallas everywhere ready to pounce upon him, had returned to Magdala rather than die by the hands of the infidel. Rumours of every description were abroad—that he had cut his throat with a razor, that he was lying drunk and incapable somewhere in the amba, that he was preparing to blow himself up in his powder magazine, and a host of others equally sensational and, it must be said, equally credible. It was not till mid-day, therefore, that the position of affairs in the fortress was known with any degree of certainty.

Soon after eight o'clock the first and second brigades were drawn up in array on the Arogee plateau at the foot of Fahla, ready to commence the trying ascent before them. Captain Speedy, with a squadron of the 3rd Light Cavalry under Colonel Loch, had been sent on in advance, to assure the chiefs and soldiers on Selassie and Fahla that not a hair of their head would be injured if they laid down their arms and left the hill. Many thousands did so; others retired to the amba to bid us defiance there.

It was a fine sight to see from the summit of the hill, the long line of red—Royal Engineers (toiling under their scaling ladders), Sappers, 33rd and 45th Regiments, the 4th King's Own in their grey karkee, the Beloochees in their dark green, the Royal Artillery in blue, the Mountain Batteries on mules, and the Armstrongs on elephants, winding up the steep and picturesque path that led to Fahla, while down the sides of the hill by every sheep track, streamed the disarmed soldiery, old men and boys, mothers and families, with their household treasures, seeking an asylum in the Arogee valley, till the storm of war should be over above. Sword and helmet sparkled in the morning sun, the banners were unfurled, the breeze was just enough to display their gay colours and the proud names woven thereon, and all nature seemed to contribute to the splendour of the pageant.

Inspirited as the soldiers were by the thought that their toils were now almost over and that success had crowned their enterprise, their ardour was also strengthened by the uncertainty which surrounded everything up to the very last moment. For all anybody knew to the contrary, Theodore might have ten thousand men in battle array on the top, or he might, as had been reported, have already died a suicide's death.

About mid-day, Fahla, Selassie, and Islamgee were occupied without a shot being fired, and many feared that the day was after all to be productive of no new excitement. But the appearance of a body of horsemen before the gate of the amba, which frowned upon us about a thousand yards further on, resembling nothing so much as five hundred Newgates rolled into one, and a few shots of defiance from Theodore himself, set all fears at rest.

The troops were meanwhile on the brow of Selassie and Islamgee farthest from Magdala, resting there till the Artillery should be put in position, the Armstrongs on the

saddle between Fahla and Selassie, beyond which the elephants could not go, the "Steel Penns" at the base of Islamgee, and the "Twisters" (B-21st Captain Twiss) on its summit. The Royal Engineers and a company of skirmishers from the 33rd Regiment having, through some mistake regarding the programme of the day, advanced beyond Islamgee, to where they saw the squadron of Light Cavalry drawn up in skirmishing order, provoked a few rounds from before the fortress, but the balls whistled harmlessly overhead, or falling short, were pocketed as curiosities.

It was not for an hour after this, however, that the cannonade began in good earnest; Sir Robert Napier and Staff had not yet finished their reconnoissance from the peak of Islamgee.

Even in the grim game of war amusing and ludicrous incidents occur, enjoyed all the more, perhaps, on account of the spice of danger with which they are seasoned. One of these occurred almost at the commencement of the day's proceedings. While Sir Robert Napier, Sir Charles Staveley, and the other generals of less degree, with their various staffs, were bringing up regiment after regiment, and endless munitions of war, an officer of Artillery, famed for his skill in gunnery, a valuable member of the Intelligence and Political Department, an artilleryman or two, a few sowars, and one or two "gentlemen of the Press," came upon eight of Theodore's big guns and a large quantity of ammunition. These were evidently what a party of skirmishers from Magdala had been looking after, thinking, no doubt, that with them the fortunes of the day might yet be retrieved.

But the *omnium gatherum* brigade was by no means inclined to retreat, much less to lose such an excellent opportunity for having a little innocent amusement by shooting some of his Majesty's horsemen, whose bullets were coming unpleasantly near. So turning the muzzles

of the guns Magdala-wards, and securing a yard of lighted rope, they blazed away as vigorously as possible, heedless of what apprehensions their cannonade might give rise to in the minds of the generals behind Islamgee, or what alterations in the mode of attack might ensue in consequence. They had kept up a rattling fire for about half-an-hour, and were just on the point of killing somebody, when an aide-de-camp galloped up with explicit instructions from Sir Charles Staveley to cease firing and retire. This was an extinguisher to all their hopes of military distinction, but there was nothing for it but yield implicit and ready obedience to General Staveley's order. A pic-nic on a look-out from school never afforded promising, because mischievous, boys greater pleasure than did that half hour's cannonading under the gate of Magdala to the boys of larger growth who tried to hoist Theodore "with his own petard."

About half-past two the steel guns of the A-21st Battery opened fire, followed by the Rocket Battery, the B-21st Battery from the top of Islamgee, and the Armstrong Battery from Fahla. The shortest range was over a thousand yards, and the longest over three thousand, so that the practice was not at first distinguished for accuracy.

Sir Robert Napier, however, never intended nor expected that shell would do terrible execution from such a distance; his object in opening where he did was to afford the artillerists an opportunity of eliminating all causes of error, which are increased at this elevation, so that they might know exactly how to regulate fuse, elevation of gun, and every other point, on being brought nearer the gate. It was also, and chiefly his desire to ascertain as fully as possible the state of affairs in Magdala, the strength of its garrison, and the contemplated mode of defence, which a careful reconnoissance from Islamgee during the cannonade enabled him to do.

When, therefore, the ranges and all other conditions necessary for good shooting had been clearly ascertained, and every shell and rocket was being fired into the very spot intended for it, His Excellency could see that the garrison was weak, and that the defence was not likely to be desperate or bloody. When a shell or rocket fell among the group of houses near the gate, where the defenders might have been expected to be, a rush of women and children from the spot was all that could be discerned.

Such being the case, humanity forbade that the artillery should be advanced, as the butchery of the innocent and defenceless would have been wholesale. The guns were, therefore, silenced, and the order of assault formed about four o'clock. Following the Royal Engineers and Bombay and Madras Sappers, went the 33rd Regiment, now destined to have its share of the fighting, as the King's Own had had at Arogee. After the 33rd went the 45th Regiment, the 4th King's Own being in reserve, and the Beloochees supporting the batteries, which also moved forward, now and again clearing the neighbourhood of the gateway with a shell.

The storming party advanced close to the natural wall of the amba before firing a shot, and then the Sniders opened. On the approach of the columns, Theodore seems to have sounded his last rallying cry, and to have gathered his men around him for one more desperate effort, for the bullets came whizzing thick and fast over our heads, a well-directed one occasionally necessitating somebody's being carried to the rear. But as soon as the skirmishers closed on their centre all that was over. A more incessant and terrible thunder than that maintained while the Engineers and Sappers rushed up to the gate, it would be vain to attempt conceiving; no living thing could have stood before it. Whenever a head appeared above the parapet, down it went to rise no more, and soon all was

silent above. A party had, however, taken refuge behind the gate, from whence they kept firing upon the Engineers who were busy belabouring the fabric which threatened to withstand their every effort and device.

On either side of the gate was a loop-holed wall, flanked by a strong thick fence, composed of horizontal pointed stakes, through which it was impossible to force one's way, and the slip of a foot involved a fall of eighty or a hundred feet. By and bye a narrow track, fit only for goats, was discovered. Tired of delay and of being 'potted' at from behind, a few daring fellows of the 33rd Regiment scrambled along the narrow and perilous track, hauled up a scaling ladder, crossed the fence, chased the Abyssinians from behind, or shot them down where they were, and assailed the door, while their comrades swarmed rapidly after them to see that they were not molested at their work.

Soon the woodwork gave way, whereupon it was discovered in what the strength of the entrance consisted. The doors were double, and the space of twenty feet between the two was carefully and strongly built up with large stones, forming a wall of extraordinary thickness and strength. Inside the gate lay a group of dead and wounded, mostly chiefs, the dead killed six times over. But another and narrower ascent had yet to be faced, defended by a strong door at the top, and commanded from loop-holed battlements all round. Up this the Engineers and Thirty-third swarmed in single file, or climbed over huts, houses, and wall into the fort, bayoneting and shooting every armed man who came in their way.

Now Magdala was taken! The firing had ceased, the British army was marching straight into the fort without further opposition than the extraordinary natural strength of the place presented; Theodorus lay dead beside the inner gate, having shot himself through the head on finding that all was lost; the captives were crowding round

kissing the hands and feet of their deliverers, and the women were chanting their notes of welcome. Close by the gate knelt a serjeant of the 33rd busily plying a file upon the fetters of the captives, who crowded around him in dozens, and his example was soon followed by scores of others. Bread, and flour, and beer, and tej—everything in fact the inhabitants could think of—were pressed upon the soldiers in token of gratitude for the deliverance they had wrought in Magdala.

Not even in the palace itself did Theodore's death seem to be regretted. His true queen Etegie Torenache, daughter of Ubie of Simyen and Tigre, a fair-complexioned, well-made, lady-like woman of about six-and-twenty, acknowledged the kind words of the officers by a polite bow, indicative of satisfaction with what they said. This queen was as unlike what Theodore was in habits and disposition as she was in personal appearance and graces, and is said by all to have been a really good and kind-hearted woman, who when her brutal and cowardly husband beat and maltreated her, opened not her mouth except to sing the psalms of David. She was indeed the only being in Abyssinia who knew no fear of Theodore, and, with more constancy than women generally are possessed of, was a true friend of the captives from first to last. No whim or fit of jealousy on the part of her cruel and unfaithful husband could alter in the slightest degree her sympathetic bearing towards those whose misfortune it was to have seen Magdala at all. Nine women out of every ten would, in circumstances less trying than hers, have simply been the reflex of their lord's ever-changing passions, adoring those whom he for the moment honoured, and compassing the ruin of those who might lucklessly fall under his suspicion. But then this poor Abyssinian queen, half-enlightened, if you like, had a well-balanced mind of her own; she was not a "woman of the period."

Her Majesty was slender, had fine features, large, full eye, a delicate hand, magnificent hair finely platted from the forehead backward, and falling in a cascade of ringlets down to her waist, instead of being tied in a knot at the nape of the neck as is the custom of the country. Her dress was the ordinary simple white cotton robe, gathered at the waist with a band. Her little son, the Dejaz Alamayo, a fine chubby boy, was playing in the room, heedless alike of the commotion around and of the cause of it.

"No thought had he of ills to come,
"No care beyond to-day."

The left-handed but favourite queen of Theodorus was altogether a different person from the true queen. She was certainly *embonpoint*—most people would term her fat; she was dark, vulgar, and voluptuous-looking in the highest degree.

Among the visitors to the palace was a private soldier, whom curiosity had prompted to enter. Finding himself close to the Queen, whose husband he had seen lying dead a few paces from the door, his honest heart welled over with genuine sympathy; he patted her Majesty tenderly on the back, telling her meanwhile that "Theodorus was *mafish*, and she was not to be afraid." "Mafish," it may be well to explain, is one of the few words the British soldier has picked up, and has a general negative signification. The import of the word as used on the occasion referred to will thus be seen at a glance.

In the palace was a collection of "Europe" articles, pianos, harmoniums, musical boxes, stereoscopes, carpets, silks, and, as the catalogues say, "a variety of Europe goods too numerous to mention"—all belonging to a civilization of which one saw few indications elsewhere.

No kingly robes, however, adorned the body of Theodore, who had evidently been fighting in disguise. He had come to know the extraordinary precision of English arms,

and knew that the wearers of scarlet doublets were the first to fall; he fought therefore in the simple cotton robe and short trousers of the period. His face and features were said by all to be in death exactly what they were in life; they were peculiar, every peculiarity, especially the stiff straight lip, and nose like that of Nero, giving one the idea of cruelty and fierceness. He was a well-made man of about five feet eight inches in height, lithe and muscular. He was buried on the day after the battle in the church in Magdala, not with military honours, but followed by a military escort and a few staff officers for the maintenance of decency and order, his body being laid beside that of the old Abuna, whose death the European captives had so much reason to regret.

The houses on Magdala were numerous, and if their appearance did not convey the idea of wealth, it at least spoke of greater comfort than did that of any we had seen hitherto. The walls and roofs were for the most part of bamboo and reed, closely interwoven and plastered over with mud. Cleanliness prevailed to a much greater extent than one was prepared to expect, after the filth, noisomeness, and horrid stinks of Selassie and Islamgee, on which were the huts of the soldiers. The prisoners' houses were on the left of the gate not far from the king's, and in close proximity to the church. All, especially Mr. Rassam's, were better than many had expected to find them; their cellars, too, were plentifully supplied; and obedient slaves were at all times watching their master's beck and will. Many a bungalow on Malabar Hill, the fashionable quarter of Bombay, has a less substantial and elegant roof than had Mr. Rassam's prison in Magdala; but while saying this, I do not for one moment mean to insinuate that the comfort of the occupants was equally great. At the same time, beyond the mere confinement and chains, the captives seems latterly to have suffered no great privation.

The fate of M. Bardel, whose name is too well known to require any introduction, may not be uninteresting. This man has long been accused, rightly or wrongly is not for me to say, of doing all that in him lay to poison the ear of Theodorus against the other captives, particularly against Messrs. Stern and Flad, and to render their misfortune deeper than even the King desired to make it. Every scrap of information which was in any way calculated to incense his Majesty against the captives is believed to have been supplied to Theodore by Bardel, whose agents in Egypt and Mussowah were kept constantly on the watch for whatever was likely to work the evil desired. If Bardel did play the base and villainous part imputed to him, the English had now an opportunity of heaping coals of fire upon his head; and if, on the other hand, he is innocent of the baseness with which he has been charged, opportunity offered for recompensing him for the wrong that had been done him.

When the van of the force reached Islamgee, there they found the poor wretch lying behind a rock, with only a dirty rag to protect him from the sun by day and the cold and rain by night, his only attendant an Abyssinian boy, who crouched at his head, wetting his fevered and burning lips with some fœtid water from a pool close by—which was the best he could procure. Now that the other Europeans had gone, Theodorus had no further need of M. Bardel's services, so he had cast him out, fevered and sunstricken as he was, to die like a dog unheeded. Four sowars of the Light Cavalry carried him to the rear; and he was ultimately conveyed to the General Hospital, where he received all the care and attention that medical skill could suggest. Under the care of Dr. Madden he quickly recovered, was furnished with carriage and all things needful for the journey to Europe, and accompanied the Force to Zoula, where he was provided with a passage to Suez.

After the capture of Magdala a garrison of British troops was left there to protect the people from the Gallas, to collect the booty, and to demolish Theodore's guns. The booty was exceedingly meagre and valueless, consisting chiefly of antiquated shields, swords, guns, spears, and corrupt texts of Scripture. Articles of national interest or value were not allowed to become the property of any private individual, but were very properly secured for the British Museum, for which Mr. Holmes, the archæologist with the Force, was making a collection.

The archæologist's work had hitherto been exceedingly unremunerative, as the route followed by the army lay so much on the confines of Abyssinia proper. The British Museum collection contained a chalice of solid gold, made in Abyssinia about the middle of the fifteenth century, and bearing the inscription, in old Ethiopic,—"The "chalice of King Adam Segud, called Gasoo, the son of "Queen Behan Mogussa, presented to Kuoskwan sanc- "tuary, Gondar. May my body and soul be purified." Besides the chalice, there were the mitre of the old Abuna, a fine shield, arms, a variety of old manuscripts, &c. Unfortunately a jewelled cross, jewelled crozier and pastoral staff, buried with the Abuna, had been stolen from his vault within the past day or two. And nothing seemed likely to lead to their recovery. Abyssinians would hardly have desecrated the body of one who was so revered and loved, nor would soldiers have been very ready to interfere with a body so far decomposed in search of loot. It is but right to state that none of the English captives was for one moment suspected of having committed the depredation in question.

Our allies the Gallas had been making themselves very troublesome of late. Having collected around Magdala to assist us in "chevying" Theodorus, if so be he had escaped, they could not be prevailed upon to go away,

preferring to stay in quest of plunder. They carried off mules, horses, grain, and women indiscriminately, not hesitating to make an open raid whenever opportunity offered. Detachments of various regiments were consequently sent out to chase them from the neighbourhood. It was, of course, necessary to stay at Magdala till it could be given over to some chief, who was able and disposed to protect the people from such inroads, else the force had already been on its way to the sea. Wakshum Gobazye, being the natural protector of that part of the country, was to be offered possession of the fortress, one or two of Theodore's smaller guns being given him, so as to enable him to hold his own. The Wakshum had hardly deserved this at our hands; but it was thought that the interests of the country required that it should be as arranged.

But Wakshum Gobazye refused to have as a gift what he considered a white elephant. He would accept Magdala on condition that the whole of Theodore's guns and mortars were given as well, and he put in a position to hold the place against all-comers. Said guns and morters, however, had been blown to pieces already, so Wakshum declined to become the tutelar deity of the fortress. It was therefore decided to demolish as much of the stronghold as possible, to burn the houses, and give the rock to Masteat, Queen of the Gallas. Her Majesty road into camp this evening to talk over and arrange the matter with Sir Robert Napier.

Besides this martial lady, there were in camp the two queens of the late Theodore, for whom some provision was being made. The Yedjou Galla woman was to go to her own people, the other was expected to return to Simyen, or, perhaps to Bombay, whither her son was likely to go.

The following particulars regarding the captured ordnance may possess some interest. There were taken in all twenty-four brass guns and nine mortars. Of the guns

there were three between 6 and 7 inches calibre 40-pounders, but carrying 50 pounds shot composed of antimony and zinc; three between 4 and 5 inches calibre, carrying 9 and 12 lb. shot, nine between 3 and 4 inches calibre carrying between 9 and 12 lb. shot, and the others smaller. The mortars varied from 20 to 2½ inches calibre. All were of native construction, some with a neat inscription in Amharic. Four of the guns were Turkish field guns, two were English from Cossipore Foundry, and two were French of old date. All were serviceable except the largest, which burst on Fahla during the action of the 10th inst. A large quantity of rude shell and case shot was also captured.

Near Attala, too, the Gallas and Abyssinians generally were troublesome, having killed several postal sowars and carried off their horses and arms. For this it was thought highly probably that Wulda Yessoos might have to give account, if he could be proved to have had any complicity in these disturbances.

Now that the Expedition was over, the work of the correspondent was well nigh over too, and that of the military and political critics and reviewers about to begin. It was believed there might be many points connected with the Expedition open to fair discussion, and demanding it; but no one who knew by experience what the campaign had been, but was ready to assert, that never would any critic or historian be able to lay his finger on a single mistake in Sir Robert Napier's plan or conduct of it. The whole of the success attending it was admitted by all to be due to the Commander-in-Chief alone, who had from first to last been his own counsellor. His staff had served him well, imbibing the spirit of their Chief, and diffusing it throughout the Army. Political difficulties had been neither few nor small; but they had all been overcome and made to work for good; the physical difficulties had been such as no army ever encoun-

tered before, yet the Force was in as good health and spirits to-day, after four hundred miles of hard marching and countless privations, as it was on starting from Zoula. The purely military work had been done with a dash and success which none could have anticipated; every captive was safely on his way back to the land of his nativity, and the world was rid of a tyrant utterly unfit to live.

While the Expedition was thus successful in every way, let not the public suppose that the Force had been living 'in clover' all the time. Hardly an army had ever had to rough it more than the Force in Abyssinia had been compelled to do during the past six weeks, and especially before Magdala. Rum, sugar, vegetables, and tobacco had not been within its borders for many a day; yea water was more scarce and precious here than ever it was at Zoula. All those privations were cheerfully borne; but the army felt that it had a right to expect that the nation would not be forgetful of what it owed to those through whose self-denial and toil its honour had been vindicated, its captives liberated, and joy brought unto it.

The captives had already left for Zoula with an escort; the head-quarters and remainder of the Force were to leave on the 18th of April.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DALANTA, *April 19th.*

The army was now on its homeward march, longing as intensely for "the sea, the sea," as ever did the brave Greeks who returned from Cunaxa under old Xenophon. Before leaving the airy heights of Baba Dalanta, however, it may not be uninteresting to take a last fond look of the hills south of the Beshilo, and briefly to record the last days of Magdala.

Theodorus being dead, and his army having been scattered, it was not considered well to leave the district without a protector, and the population as sheep without a shepherd, for the late king, however much he may have plundered the people himself, certainly did not allow any one else to plunder them. The most eligible man seemed to be Wakshum Gobazye; and the choice therefore fell upon him.

But the Wakshum, being a shrewd and practical man of the world, as we have seen, did not hesitate to look a gift horse in the mouth, and the result of the examination in this case was that the proffered steed was politely but firmly refused. Magdala, he said, had been a curse to every one who had ever ruled there, consequently it did not excite his cupidity; moreover he might not be able to hold it against the Gallas, unless possessed of Theodore's guns; his acceptance of the fortress, therefore, would, under any circumstances, be entirely conditional on his receiving all the cannon and mortars as well. With this condition Sir Robert Napier would not comply; the destruction of the guns and mortars was already in progress, and the order was given to destroy Magdala with them.

Yet, even in its dismantled and desolate condition, Magdala did not long remain unsought after. Before Gobazye had well given his answer, two rival queens rode into camp full of congratulations and expectations. Workeit, sister of the late Amada Beshir, King of the Gallas, who had held the reigns of government during the minority of her niece, and was now loth to resign them to younger and fairer hands, represented her claims to the Amba on Friday; and on Saturday, Masteeat, daughter of Amada Beshir, successfully pressed hers, taking possession of the fort with a body of horse and foot—rascals of sorts—as soon as the English army started on its return.

The *casus belli* that exist between these two queens were

somewhat the same as existed between good Queen Bess and Scotland's martyr'd Mary:—their religious tenets differed, Masteeat being a staunch follower of the Prophet, while Workeit favoured Christianity; the elder, now in the sere and yellow leaf, could not 'a-bear' the comparative youth and fairer charms of her rival; Masteeat—and this was the most aggravating part of the whole—had a promising son while Workeit was already "an old stock," beyond the reach of even expectations; and their claims to sovereignty also clashed. The title of Masteeat to the fortress was decided to be valid, so she took possession of it, leaving her aunt to take her revenge in scandal, as she was pretty sure to do, having no doubt heard that her niece was much admired by the politicals, and that she had her photograph taken before she left.

The following orders for the destruction of the magazine and buildings on Magdala were issued on the 16th:—

"The troops, with the exception of the Sappers and Miners, under the direction of Captain Goodfellow, R.E., will be wholly withdrawn from Magdala by 4 P.M. on the 17th instant.

"Captain Goodfellow will then destroy the Kafurbur gate, and will ascertain by careful observation whether he can explode the magazine without injury to the church. He will also consider whether it will be safe to explode the magazine first, and then fire the remaining buildings successively, commencing from the Kafurbur gate or southern portion of the fort, and finally, after withdrawing the Sappers, will blow up the northern entrance, under such arrangements as will prevent any injury to his party. Should he be able to blow up the magazine without injury to the church he will do so; otherwise he will not blow up the magazine, but will fire the buildings in such a way as to prevent any injury to his men from the accidental explosion of the magazine.

"He will then join the withdrawn garrison of Magdala which will return to camp, where they will rest for the night and prepare to march to Dalanta under such detailed instructions as they may receive from Major General Sir Charles Staveley, on the 18th instant.

"As the destruction of the buildings at Magdala may be the signal for the Gallas to come forward in considerable numbers, it will be necessary that the garrison should not pass Islamgee until joined by the Sappers.

"No stragglers whatever should be permitted to remain behind. A provost-serjeant should be in attendance, and summary punishment inflicted on any who may attempt to linger behind for the sake of plunder or any other object. Care should be taken that the orders on this point shall be made known to the camp-followers.

"No watering parties or picquets should be overlooked, and all baggage should be sent away early enough to be clear of the troops."

The work of devastation—blowing up the gates, the magazine, and burning houses—was thus entrusted to Captain W. W. Goodfellow, of the Royal Engineers. On the afternoon of Friday the 17th instant, after the least worthless of the booty had been removed, the garrison withdrew to Islamgee, there to wait for the Sappers and Miners, lest disturbances might arise from an irruption of lawless Gallas who could not but see, from far and near, the terrible amba in flames. The 4th King's Own assembled about three o'clock on the summit of the hill, their colours were unfurled, and they marched gaily to the northern gate, the band appropriately playing the popular air—"When Johnnie comes marching home." Near the gate they halted, the band played the national anthem, and three ringing cheers were given for the loved Queen whose morning drum beats round the world.

Meanwhile Captain Goodfellow and his Sappers had

been busily at work; the southern gate had fallen; and half Magdala was in flames. The saltpetre and sulphur in the magazine were scarcely more combustible than the houses themselves; everything blazed like tinder, and the flames were rapidly spread by a steady breeze from the eastward. It was intended to have left the church standing, as a testimony unto the heathen, but a pyramid of fire laid hold upon it and licked it up, and the church-bell alone remains, proclaiming by its silence the terrible fate of the tyrant under those ruins, who neither feared God nor regarded man. When twilight was beginning to spread over the hills and the glow of the conflagration was brightest against the evening sky, the northern gate was blown to fragments, and the last cheer proclaimed the work of mercy and vengeance fully accomplished. There was not in Magdala one living thing, nor one stone left upon another.

On the morning of the 18th of April the bugles seemed to sound reveille more clearly and cheerily than they had done for many a day; for they roused the soldier to prepare for his homeward march. Not a man in the Force but was sick of Magdala and longed to leave it. Water there was hardly any nearer than the Beshilo; the wells in the valley below sometimes yielded a pailful or two, but it stank horribly and tasted worse. To intensify the situation, the heat and drought were unusually great; halt, and maimed, and aged, and dying lay by the waysides, or crawled away they knew not whither; here lay a few dead mules, and there a group of human bodies, many of them half-eaten by the hyænas and jackals, and all of them undergoing rapid decomposition. The stench that prevailed over Islamgee, Selassie, the ghaut, the Arogee valley, and all the way up from the Beshilo, was positively frightful; soon the atmosphere must have become pestilential.

It would be vain to attempt assigning any number to

the bodies scattered about in all directions,—those of the animals must have been in thousands, and those of human beings at least in hundreds. In one group, within a compass of twenty or thirty yards, I counted nineteen oxen, which had lain down there at night and died of starvation before the morning. If Magdala of late years presented one tithe of the horrors and abominations which surrounded it during those eight days, from the 10th of April to the 18th, it was positive kindness on the part of Theodorus to confine Mr. Rassam and his companions to their cool tomato groves and more cleanly neighbourhood, where, though they might hear with the ear, their eyes could not see, the nakedness and suffering of the land. In Magdala itself some care did seem to have been paid to sanitation —indeed the amba had a main drain ; but Selassie and Islamgee, the abode of the bulk of the Abyssinian army, were in a state of filth indescribable.

Now that Theodorus was dead and his dynasty and power at an end, it was not difficult to foresee at least something of what the next few years would bring forth in Abyssinia. Another man was fast rising into power ; and though his dominion would never extend as Theodore's once did, from the Red Sea to the Equator, it bade fair soon to be by no means small or insignificant. Wakshum Gobazye was no favourite with the English, perhaps, nor did he deserve to be ; but it was impossible to deny that he was at this time the most powerful chief in the South of Abyssinia. While his minister, the Dejaz Mechecha, had been watching the game being played by Sir Robert Napier and Theodorus, he had been making hay around Gondar, had conquered Tessoo Gobazye, and made himself master of the whole of Amhara and Lasta—even to the Egyptian frontier. His cousin and former rival, Wakshum Tiferri, a shrewd and clever man, was among the captives released from chains in Magdala ; he had had

enough of war and bloodshed, and declared his readiness to strengthen his relative's hands instead of opposing him as he has erstwhile done.

Another of the rescued prisoners was Burru Goshoo, chief of Godjam, a cruel, bad man regarding whom frequent mention is made in Dr. Beke's work. This ungrateful scoundrel would not even stay to express thanks to Sir Robert Napier for his liberation, but hurried away to his province to re-mount the *guddee* and murder all usurpers and pretenders. Prince Kassa of Tigre was now master of the north, his friendship with the English had been in a great measure the making of him. Two kingdoms were thus springing up side by side, without any immediate prospect of a rupture between them. The political atmosphere was much clearer than it had been in Abyssinia for many a day.

It may not be uninteresting to give some account of the Trigonometrical survey carried on along the route of the Expedition. Lieutenant Carter, R. E., the officer in charge of the survey, had by this time finished a traverse with the theodolite as far as the Beshilo, making a rough sketch of the country from Antalo. His assistants, Lieutenants Dummler and Holdich, were now working the former from Antalo towards Addigerat, and the latter from Addigerat towards Antalo.

A correct survey of the country had thus been made from Zoula to Antalo, and a hurried traverse from Antalo to the Beshilo. The value of this traverse is, that it was done with the theodolite, avoiding local attraction of the compass, and that it therefore gives the geographical route of the army correct, especially as it was verified by astronomical observation. Great difficulty was experienced by the surveyors in finding guides or interpreters, or the detailed survey would have been carried beyond Antalo, probably, with some additional assistance, to the Beshilo itself.

The storms of thunder and rain which caused so much discomfort and annoyance when last the Force was encamped on Dalanta plain, had now disappeared, giving place to hot days and chilly, cold nights. It was plain, from the experiences of the past fortnight, that upon good water and good food, more than upon fair weather, depended the health of the troops. Another week before Magdala, with its vile water—decoction of dead donkeys—and bad meat, would most assuredly have filled the hospitals with cases of low fever and violent diarrhœa. Even as matters stood, there was a tendency to both those diseases in the Force, though the general health, especially of the Europeans, was very good. It was, of course, to be expected that invaliding would be of more frequent occurrence during the return march than it had been during the advance. Men had hitherto been not only prevented from malingering, but actually fortified against disease, by the burning desire to reach Magdala and the excitement attending their rapid approach thereto. They knew, moreover, that the slightest symptom of illness would inevitably lead to their being detained at the first depôt—an eventuality which they regarded with the greatest horror. Such an easy mode of disposing of a footsore or failing soldier could not now be resorted to, so the probability was that neither bad heels nor sick headaches would be made light of, so long at least as there were any dhoolies or spare mules available. It will not be out of place to mention in this connection, that the Force was now only two days' march from an abundant supply of rum, which would speedily revive many a drooping heart.

CHAPTER XXIV.

DALANTA, *April 21st.*

The campaign in Abyssinia was yesterday formally proclaimed to be over, and all the troops were assembled to hear the words of congratulation addressed to them by the Commander-in-Chief. A more gallant, more severely tried, or better-equipped little army than that which passed in review before Sir Robert Napier on April 20th, on the plain of Dalanta, no General need ever desire to command. It was complete in itself, and ready for any service whatsoever. The whole of the First Division was present—the 3rd Dragoon Guards, the 3rd Bombay Cavalry, Sind Horse, 12th Bengal Cavalry, G-14, A-21, B-21, 5-25 Royal Artillery, Naval Brigade, 10th Company Royal Engineers, 4th King's Own, 33rd and 45th Regiments, 10th N. I., the Belooch Regiment, 23rd Punjab Pioneers, and the Bombay and Madras Sappers and Miners. Major General Sir Charles Staveley commanded the Division, Brigadier General Schneider the first brigade, Brigadier General Wilby the second, Brigadier General Petrie the Artillery, and Colonel Graves, the Cavalry.

About nine o'clock the division was drawn up in line of contiguous quarter distance columns, the Cavalry on the right, the Artillery in the centre, and the Infantry on the left. The Force was then directed to deploy into line, in which position it was when the Commander-in-Chief arrived on the ground, accompanied by a large and brilliant Staff. His Excellency was received with a general salute by the troops, and the salute due to his rank from the guns of the G-14th R.A. The division was then broken into open column of companies, squadrons, and batteries, and marched past in quick time. Line having been reformed, the troops were drawn up in hollow square, first brigade in front, the second on the left, the Artillery on

the right, the Cavalry forming the fourth side. In the centre were the Commander-in-Chief and Staff, and the whole of the rescued captives.

Square having been formed, His Excellency congratulated the "soldiers and sailors of the Army of Abyssinia" upon the glorious termination of the arduous and weary campaign in which they had been engaged, and called upon Colonel Thesiger, Deputy Adjutant General, to read the order which was to be published to them. That order was as follows :—

"SOLDIERS AND SAILORS OF ABYSSINIA.—The Queen and the people of England entrusted to you a very difficult and arduous Expedition—to release our countrymen from a painful and long captivity, and to vindicate the honour of our country which had been outraged by Theodore, King of Abyssinia.

"I congratulate you with all my heart on the noble way in which you have fulfilled the commands of our Sovereign.

"You have traversed, often under a tropical sun, or storms of rain and sleet, four hundred miles of mountainous and difficult country; you have crossed many steep and precipitous ranges of mountains more than ten thousand feet in altitude, where your supplies could not keep pace with you.

"When you arrived within reach of your enemy, though with scanty food, and some of you for many hours without either food or water, in four days you passed the formidable chasm of the Beshilo and defeated the army of Theodore, which poured down upon you from their lofty fortress, in the full confidence of victory.

"A host of many thousands have laid down their arms at your feet.

"You have captured or destroyed upwards of thirty pieces of artillery, many of great weight and efficiency, with ample store of ammunition.

"You have stormed the almost inaccessible fortress of Magdala, defended by Theodore with the desperate remnant of his chiefs and followers.

"After you forced the entrance, Theodore, who never showed mercy, distrusted the offer of mercy which had been held out to him, and died by his own hand.

"You have released not only the British captives, but also those of other friendly nations.

"You have unloosed the chains of more than ninety of the principal chiefs of Abyssinia.

"Magdala, on which so many victims have been slaughtered, has been committed to the flames, and remains only a scorched rock.

"Our complete and rapid success is due, first to the mercy of God, whose hand, I feel assured, has been over us in a just cause; secondly, to the high spirit with which you have been inspired.

"Indian soldiers have forgotten the distinctions of race and creed, to keep pace with their European comrades.

"Never has an army entered on a war with more honourable feelings than yours; this has carried you through many fatigues; you have been only eager for the moment when you could close with your enemy.

"The remembrance of your privations will pass away quickly, but your gallant exploit will live in history.

"The Queen and the people of England will appreciate your services.

"On my part, as your Commander, I thank you for your devotion to your duty, and the good discipline you have maintained. Not a single complaint has been made against a soldier for villagers wilfully molested in property or person.

"We must not forget what we owe to our comrades who have been labouring for us in the sultry climate of Zoula and the Pass of Koomaylee, or the monotony of

posts which maintained our communication. Each and all would have given all they possess to be with us; and they deserve our gratitude.

"I shall watch over your safety to the moment of your re-embarkation, and to the end of my life remember with pride that I have commanded you.

"R. NAPIER, *Lieutenant-General,*
"*Commander-in-Chief.*

"Camp Dalanta, 20th April."

A most interesting, indeed an affecting ceremony followed. The foreign officers—German, French, and Italian—were called upon to come forward, were introduced to the army, and publicly thanked by the Commander-in-Chief for the sympathy they had at all times exhibited with the Force during the campaign, and for the cheerfulness with which they had borne the unavoidable hardships and privations, sharing cheerfully the tent and the bivouac. To them, as the representatives of their various nations, the captives were then severally handed over.

It was a touching sight to behold that motley group of rescued captives—old men grown grey from long years of captivity, care, and anxiety; men in their prime; fair dames who had never before known what freedom was; young men and children, many still in the dress of their captivity, standing uncovered in the midst of the army that had rescued them, the tear in the eye expressing even more strongly than the smile on the lip, the joy and thankfulness that pervaded each heart.

Nor were their deliverers unaffected. While Sir Robert Napier was commending the captives to the care of their countrymen, or receiving the heartfelt thanks of some aged man for the prospect of one or two years of joy at most, many an eye throughout the Force was turned aside for a little while, that the tear which could not be repressed might trickle down the cheek or be wiped away unseen.

The foreign officers with the Expedition were : German—Count Seckendorf, Lieutenant Stumm, and Dr. Rohlfs; French—Commandant Galli, Captain d'Hendecourt, and Count Sayve, of the Suez Canal ; Italian—Major Bacon and Captain Osio ; Dutch—Lieutenant Boyes and Lieutenant Prince ; Austrian—Count Kilmannsegg, and Count Kodolitsch. General Florenti and Colonel the Count de Mirasol, of the Spanish army, joined the Force at Antalo, on its return.

The troops having re-formed line of contiguous columns, officers and colours were called to the front in review order, a royal salute was fired, the troops presenting arms, the colours flying and music playing all along the line, three lusty cheers were given for Her Majesty, and the division marched to quarters.

Admirably does the Chief's General Order sum up the story of the Abyssinian campaign. That brief document will form the text for future historians, and when, in remote times, all details respecting our quarrel with the last king of Ethiopia shall have been excluded from the overcrowded page, Sir Robert Napier's terse but comprehensive little narrative will keep its place in the chronicles of our century, and in the records of the Indian and British armies. The effect of the Chief's proclamation is, of course, vastly enhanced, when all the surrounding circumstances and the scene at which it was read are taken into account.

Sir Robert in his General Order makes due reference to the hardships endured, but, as every true soldier would have it, he does no more than that. Nevertheless, those who were at home at ease should take some pains to realise in detail what is comprised in those privations of which the outline is given in the Order. Hunger and thirst, especially the latter, will wait neither for time nor tide ; and when the exhausted soldier arrived at the end of a march

—it might be in cutting wind or in the torrid glare—and found that no water was to be obtained that night, the sensation of thirst became aggravated tenfold.

Then again as to the "staff of life" itself, the men of the two first brigades for weeks together had nothing better than the Abyssinian *tej*—bread so coarse as to resemble compressed fodder, the effects of which upon most constitutions medical men can best describe. A still larger number of the Force were for long intervals without vegetables, rum, or sugar—articles which are almost invaluable both as anti-scorbutics and as diet. As to food, if such it could be called, the only supply at all plentiful during the last three weeks of the march was the coarsest of beef, tough as the hide that enclosed it, and rivalling in impenetrability the "old hoss" so quaintly apostrophised by the Boston sailors in "Two years before the Mast." With hard fare like this, it taxed the physical powers of footsore soldiers to the utmost, merely to climb the precipitous hillsides or scramble down terrible ravines; but besides carrying their accoutrements, incalculable efforts were demanded of them in dragging or driving mules as weary as themselves, and often in carrying heavy burdens intended for the animals. All this, with certain exceptions that are not worth remembering, was endured cheerily, and that by native Indian soldiers as well as by Europeans.

Those who know anything of the reverent and thoughtful character of Sir Robert Napier are well assured that he would never adopt the conventional feint of congratulating oneself under the guise of attributing to Providence any and every turn of good fortune that befalls us. When, in his General Order he says, "Our complete and rapid success is due, first to the mercy of God whose hand, I feel assured, has been over us in a just cause," he does but reach after that great determining influence whose behests all the nations of the world must obey, whatever interme-

diate explanations they make to themselves concerning Him. No secular explanation will account for Theodorus —who cannot but have known something of the irresistible strength of the British Force—declining to take the obviously safe, and, as it might have been, triumphant course open to him, that of taking the captives where, for at least many months to come, they would have been beyond our reach. Instead of this, in dragging his mortars and heavy baggage to Magdala, Theodorus expended twice the time that would have been occupied in withdrawing the captives beyond Lake Tsana.

Thus the Negus, whose cup of iniquity was full, freely placed himself wholly within the grasp of the British Forces, which swept him away with all his power. The motives that combined to urge Theodorus to the mistaken strategy which proved so fatal to him, lie wholly beyond our boasted skill in tracing effect to cause, and there will be very few dissentients from the pious feeling of the Chief who refers this to Providential influence.

It is impossible to do full justice to the noble and yet simple Proclamation by Sir Robert Napier. Those only can appreciate it who have long known the sincere, earnest, and generous character of the beloved Chief; while none can fully realise its significance, but those who had the opportunity of hearing him converse on the possible perils and serious issues of the great enterprise whilst the earlier preparations were being made; or those again who at the St. Andrew's dinner in Bombay, in 1867, heard him, in modest but trustful and courageous phrase, commit to Providence the issue of the Expedition, towards which he felt assured all concerned would give their best endeavours. And so indeed it was.

The death of Dr. Deeble, which took place at Dalanta on the morning of the 20th, was much regretted by the Force. The deceased officer had been suffering from acute

dysentery for some time, and could not, under the circumstances in which he was placed, bear up against it. Bad water and low diet were now inducing phases of disease hardly known elsewhere than among jail patients. His remains were interred in the evening with military honours.

Theodore's 'displenish sale' had now been going on for a couple of days. The booty was the most wretched collection of rubbish one could well conceive. Brussels carpets, cloaks, tents, and mats—"all alive O,"—silver or tin ornamented shields, rusty matchlocks, crosses, old swords, and many other things whose chief value was that they bore no resemblance to anything in heaven or on the earth, or in the waters under the earth. Yet the auctioneer, the ubiquitous and energetic Captain Sweny, spent not his strength for naught; the bidding was brisk, and the prices fetched were as high as if every bidder had been an agent specially deputed by Madame Tussaud, or an incipient Barnum. The shields generally fetched about Rs. 150, that upon which some knowing wag had scratched the name of Theodore commanded Rs. 405. It is needless to say that a stain of blood greatly enhanced the value of the article upon which it happened to be. The proceeds were expected to amount to about £4,000, which sum will be divided as prize money among the non-commissioned officers and men who were south of the Djedda.

The mention of extravagant prices reminds me that an enterprising Greek brought even to the Beshilo, a cargo of cheese, sardines, tobacco, candles, and matches. For these articles he found a ready sale at his own figures, which were—cheese, two dollars a pound, sardines, one dollar per small tin, tobacco four dollars a pound, and candles three dollars a pound. If dollars are converted into rupees, or shillings and pence, the cost of the cheese, &c., will be more vividly realized. The Peloponnesian deserved, however, to be repaid for his enterprise and risk.

The Pioneer Force and the captives crossed the Djedda on April 21st; the second brigade was on that day encamped on its southern bank, and would cross to Bet Hor on the morrow, the first brigade and head-quarters following. It was calculated that every man of the Force would be at, or south of, Senafe by the end of May, and there did not seem to be anything to prevent it. There were on the highlands between five and six thousand mules, of which nearly half were with the Force. Many of these were sadly in want of food and rest, having suffered terribly before Magdala; but others were being purchased as rapidly as possible. The Gallas sent in excellent ponies, the best of which were given to the Sind Horse for temporary remounts, and the remainder handed over to the Transport Train.

All was quiet around Magdala; the Gallas were flocking to the standard of Masteeat, rejoicing at the re-occupation of Magdala by the brave daughter of old Amada Beshir.

April 23rd.

The crossing of the Djedda ravine was without exception the most difficult and fatiguing march between Magdala and Zoula; consequently no small amount of satisfaction was experienced at being again in Wadela, on the northern bank of that river. It may perhaps be remembered by others besides the regiments composing the first and second brigades, what that march involved on the 2nd of April, when the army was on its way to Magdala. Hardly any of the baggage reached Dalanta before dark; all night long it kept coming in, and the greater part of next morning as well. A large part of the Force found it utterly impossible to ascend the southern bank, choked as the road was with all the paraphernalia of an army on the march, and had to spend the night on the cold cheerless hill-side, exposed to the rain which that night fell heavily.

The remembrance of that occasion led to an early start on the morning of the 23rd, the camp being astir by four o'clock, and the column on the move by five. Another lesson was derived from the passing of the Beshilo, viz., not to allow the baggage to precede the regiments in difficult and narrow roads like those in question.

So, taking due advantage of his own experience and that of others, General Schneider ordered the column to start from the Dalanta plain at dawn, and the baggage to follow, attended, of course, by an adequate rear-guard. Breakfast was cooked the night before, and eaten in the bed of the river in the morning; no time was thus lost, nor were the men exposed to the evil effects of undue abstinence from food. Thus to take advantage of the early hours, and to have half the day's march over before the heat of the day, is undoubtedly a far more soldierly mode of proceeding than to strike tents about ten o'clock, complacently muttering something about having "enjoyed a comfortable breakfast," as they say the second brigade was in the way of doing.

The result of this early rising movement was that the whole of the troops arrived at their camping-ground early in the afternoon; the whole of the tents were pitched, and most of the baggage to hand, while several hours of daylight yet remained during which one might prepare and enjoy "a comfortable dinner."

The effect of the rains which so incommoded dwellers in tents a fortnight ago, had not yet been lost upon the Djedda; fine clear water was running in its bed, which formerly exhibited only one or two stagnant and forbidding pools. The second brigade was one day's march ahead of the first, and the Pioneer Force with the ex-captives, two. It was previously arranged that both brigades should halt a day at the Taccazze; but, lest the first should overtake the second, and so cause even a day's

delay, the latter was ordered not to halt till it reached Dildee—the second camp beyond the Taccazze.

The Abyssinians generally assured Sir Robert Napier, when *en route* to Magdala, that they would give him many a proof of their love as he returned, if so be that he left Theodore dead behind him. This condition having been fulfilled, the clergy and laity punctually set to work to redeem their promise. It was evident that His Excellency was to be *fêted* all the way to Senafe, and I believe I am not far wrong in stating that he, in common with every one in his camp, shuddered at the prospect.

A triumph in Abyssinia is an ordeal altogether *per se*; there are no laurel wreaths, triumphal arches, or splendid banquets; neither are there enthusiastic crowds to cheer the victor and sing "Io triumphe"—satisfied if only they can catch a glimpse of his face as he passes. But there are crowds of enthusiastic psalm singers—priests and congregations improvised for the nonce, whose enthusiasm knows no bounds, and who will not be satisfied with a glimpse of him whom they delight to honour. No, they will scream not only till they have seen the unfortunate individual well, but till they have extorted from him a handful or two of dollars.

One of these crowds, led by four avaricious-looking prelates, infested the camp at Bet Hor, rendering the afternoon hideous with their cries. The procession was accompanied by their taboot, or holy of holies, containing the ark, a heterogeneous collection of crosses, paintings, and other articles of their religion; three of the priests shook tinkling cymbals, and the fourth beat a large drum with a vigour which indicated with unmistakeable clearness the extent of their expectations in the way of dollars.

Meanwhile the clergy sang the more jubilant of the psalms of David, capering about in the same manner as they supposed their great pattern danced before the ark.

It may be that the dance has lost much of its grace and beauty in these latter days, or it may be that the limbs of the dancers were not so lithe as they ought to have been; but if king David had no better idea of the poetry of motion than these his imitators, or could think of no less ridiculous method of giving vent to the exuberance of his feelings, it is not surprising that his wife should have severely rebuked him.

The surrounding crowd joined in the chorus, but not in the dance; they clapped their hands, however, as their mirth grew furious. A message conveyed to them, to the effect that Sir Robert Napier was asleep and that they need not continue the service, altogether failed to effect the desired object. They retired for a little, but soon returned, this time accompanied by a small boy with a big bell, and another with an instrument of the corncraik order, so that they might without fail awaken His Excellency, if peradventure he still slept. Fortunately, however, for the peace of the camp, Sir Robert was awake, and expressed his appreciation of their attentions in such a way as to confirm their high opinion of him, and to send them away rejoicing for other reasons than that Theodore was now no more.

It should be mentioned to their credit, that the psalmody was not so rude as the dancing.

CHAPTER XXV.

ON THE TACCAZZE, *April 28th.*

The chief news which correspondents could now give, or readers expect, from Abyssinia, must of necessity be immediately connected with the return of the Force to Annesley Bay. It was gratifying to all, except perhaps Commissariat contractors, to learn that everything continued to bespeak a rapid march to Senafe, and a speedy

embarkation at Zoula. There was a possibility, however, that the whole of the Force might not take ship at that port, for, should the rains have overtaken the rear guard, and rendered the Sooroo Pass impracticable, the regiments remaining on the highlands might have gone by way of the Taranta Pass to Mussowah, whither transports could easily have been sent to await their arrival. This was, of course, by no means certain ; but the practicability of it was now receiving consideration. The Brigadier General commanding at Senafe was instructed at once to depute an officer, with suitable escort and assistance, to examine and report upon the Taranta Pass, which was said by some to be passable at all seasons ; and upon his report, together with the weather during the next two months, depended, of course, Sir Robert Napier's decision on the subject.

According to present arrangements, the re-embarkation was to commence about the 15th of May, and, it was hoped, would be over by the 20th of June. Much yet remained to be settled regarding the disposition of enormous numbers of baggage animals, the large quantities of stores, &c., which would gradually be concentrated at the coast, and of which a great part would be found unfit for re-transportation to India or England. The Punjab Mule Train was, if possible, to be sent home in a stronger and more efficient state than it arrived ; the elephants and the best of the mules and camels were to be sent to India ; many might be disposed of at Mussowah and in Egypt; bullocks would provide beef for the garrison at Aden ; and liberal presents would be made to deserving friends in the country ; but, after all, much worthless trash would remain to be dealt with. Of course the remainder, be it large or small, would not be allowed to cause the least delay ; but time and a certain amount of transport were necessary before the coast could be cleared of that portion which might be found to possess any value. Cavalry regi-

ments which stood in need of remounts—and all in Abyssinia did so more or less—were to be equipped from the number of officers' chargers that would be for sale, or from the best horses in the Transport Train. Officers returning to England would hardly think of taking their chargers with them even to Cairo, if they could realize a fair price for them at Zoula, and many returning to India had spare ones with which a small bill on the Government of India induced them readily to part.

The Force promised to be in what may be termed easy circumstances as regards transport as far as Antalo; and there the Highland Train was expected to receive a large accession to its strength from the lowlands. There were now *en route* to meet it—two thousand mules, four thousand two hundred and fifty pack bullocks, one thousand donkeys, and sixty carts, of which one thousand five hundred bullocks, nine hundred donkeys, and the carts were already beyond Senafe. In addition to the above, three hundred mules and tattoos had left Zoula, to be followed by three thousand more, whose arrival from Suez was daily expected at the date of last despatches. These animals were all loaded with gram and barley for the Commissariat depôts beyond Senafe.

Should the question again be raised whether the expeditionary Force might not safely and wisely have been smaller than Sir Robert Napier considered necessary, events which transpired about this time between Antalo and Lat, where we came most in contact with the Gallas, will serve to assist in forming a correct conclusion. The depôts in that tract of country having been somewhat weakened in order that the brigades in front might be equal to cope with any contingency, these freebooters seized the opportunity, to threaten and plunder depôts and convoys, to interrupt postal and other communications, and even to murder the sowars.

The Belago Pass, between *Attala* and *Mukhan*—a nasty,

jungly piece of country, the appearance of which even at noonday suggested the idea of cut-throats and robbers—had of late been infested with these tribes, and rendered unsafe for any convoy, valuable or otherwise, unless attended by a very strong escort. Mails had on several occasions been looted and convoys robbed, the guards having been taken at a disadvantage and overpowered by superior numbers. Their last attempt was made upon a treasure convoy in charge of Lieutenant Holt, who brought their hostile preparations to a stop, by ordering his escort to fire upon the ringleaders. Several of the marauders were severely wounded, the rest made off, and the convoy was allowed to proceed without further molestation.

Wulda Yessoos, however, effected to be grievously angry at the "unprovoked attack" which had been made upon his peaceful subjects and proteges, who, he said, had happened to meet in the Belago ravine without any concert on their part, and looked upon the convoy with no other feelings than those of admiration and meaningless curiosity. Lieutenant Holt and his men thought otherwise; the Gallas were unfortunate in their meeting-place, which was of bad repute before, and they were still more unfortunate in their choice of an advocate, so General Malcolm held that they deserved all they had got.

It is evident that nothing but the display of power prevented many chiefs and tribes from making our acquaintance in a very different way than they did; and it was fortunate alike for them and for us that pacific relations were maintained. The whole of the Belago district had now to be patrolled by infantry and cavalry day and night.

It was with the greatest sorrow that the Force learned of the death of Lieutenant Morgan, of the Royal Engineers, in whom the Army lost a promising young officer, and many an officer a valued friend. Mr. Morgan was in charge of the Signal Party of Royal Engineers from

England,—a post which entailed upon him many a hard day's and night's work, but in the duties connected with which he was ever zealous. The illness, which proved fatal on the 26th inst., was brain fever, induced, it is believed, by over application to the responsible and arduous duties entrusted to him during the last three days before Magdala. His remains were interred with military honours in the grave-yard of St. Gabriel's, the Commander-in-Chief, his Staff, and many brigade and regimental officers attending his funeral.

Never, I believe, was the death of an officer more deeply regretted than Mr. Morgan's was by the 10th Company of Royal Engineers. The brave and hardly fellows who had followed him up to the gate of Magdala without flinching or fear, sobbed audibly around his last resting-place on the lone hill side above the Taccazze, and hardly an eye there was dry. That lonely grave will be a sacred spot in the remembrance of many an one in the Force, and it will be sacred too in the eyes of the priests, who, at the Commander-in-Chief's request, promised to tend and keep it with the greatest care.

The following order regarding Lieut. Morgan's death was published by the Commander-in-Chief:—

"The Commander-in-Chief has received with great regret the report of the death of Lieutenant Morgan, R.E., in charge of the signallers of the 10th Company of Royal Engineers.

"Sir Robert Napier had constant opportunities of observing the unflagging zeal and energy of this young officer, and the cheerful alacrity with which he embraced every opportunity to render his special work useful to the Force.

"Lieutenant Morgan set a bright example to those under his command; and by his premature loss, owing to prolonged exposure and fatigue, Her Majesty's service and the corps of Royal Engineers are deprived of a most promising officer."

There can only be one reason for mentioning the name

of the transport *India* from Calcutta, viz., the terrible mortality which took place among the Kachar coolies who formed her freight to Zoula. In January last Sir Robert Napier ordered an enquiry to be made into the circumstances attending this mortality, and Drs. Pelly and Maitland, appointed to conduct it, reported to the following effect—that the superficial and cubic space allotted to each individual was insufficient, that ventilation was imperfect, that the outbreak was intensified by the coolies having no warm clothing, which was kept securely locked up in a box below, that the native doctor was all but useless, and that the disinfectants were insufficient.

These views having been communicated to Bengal, the authorities there were at a loss for a reply, but recommended that Brigadier General Stewart and Major Roberts, V.C., should be asked about it. This was done, and General Stewart ordered a committee consisting of Lieutenant Irvine, R.N., Captain Edwardes, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General, and Dr. Grant, 12th Bengal Cavalry, to examine and report upon the vessel. This committee was instructed to enquire as to the number of native troops or followers the *India* was capable of carrying, having due regard to the requirements of a tropical climate, and the regulations of the service on this point; whether the ventilation was sufficient; whether the disinfectants were sufficient, and whether they were freely and properly used; the date and circumstances under which the sickness first commenced; whether the crew suffered from the prevailing disease, and to what extent; whether the native doctor was capable of performing his duty; whether the master and crew appeared to have done their duty under the circumstances; and to go fully into the case, and record their opinion thereon.

The finding was, that the *India* was fully capable of carrying 423 coolies; that the regulations of the service

were carried out by the Calcutta authorities; that ventilation was sufficient and disinfectants ditto, that the sickness arose from infection caught from sick coolies embarked at Calcutta, and that only two of the crew died at sea. The native doctor had returned to India, so they could not examine and report upon him; nor could they give a reliable opinion regarding the conduct of the master and crew, as they had only their own side of the story to judge by. Captain Tryon agreed with this opinion, and stated that he would have no hesitation in shipping 423 Europeans in the *India*. These opinions, with a survey report of the vessel, were now before Sir Robert Napier, who had the difficult task of deciding between them.

The postal department between Zoula and Magdala gave no greater satisfaction than that between Zoula and Bombay. Irregularity and uncertainty were its distinguishing characteristics. Letters, yea whole mails, were unaccountably lost; and bags came to hand containing only a mass of pulp or a collection of letters *minus* covers, or covers *minus* letters.

The result of this was that one might by some lucky chance get his own letter in the envelope addressed to him, or he might just as likely get that of somebody else. The post-offices were now taking steps to discover the addresses of the various fragmentary epistles in their possession, but the attempted mode of getting rid of them was not successful as making a bonfire of the heap would have been. Lists were published, giving the opening and concluding words of each letter, which were sometimes sufficiently provocative of unsympathizing mirth to deter the fondest expectant from declaring himself to be the "darling Bob" or "beloved Fred" in question. Tom commenced his homeward letter, which had made shipwreck before reaching Antalo, by assuring his "darling Kate" that her "sweet letter came to hand yesterday," and concluded with "very best love to his darling Pet." Edwin informed

Neile that he has "received both letters," and added—"Susan and the kids send their love." Had I been Tom I should have been inclined under the circumstances to deny Kate for once, and Neile, not improbably, would have nothing to say to "Susan and the kids."

The first brigade was to march on Dildee on the 29th of April (to-morrow), where the second had halted the day before. So miserably cold and comfortless, and in every way wretched, was the night spent at Wandach on the way up, that it was to be passed by altogether, every one preferring a long and trying march to a halt on such a bleak and cheerless hill-side.

The cold on the Dalanta and Wadela plateaus during the past week was intense, a piercingly chill wind blowing the greater part of the day, and rendering the rays of even a tropical sun of none effect. The other morning, when the Force got up at four to prepare for the start, the water in all the leather mussuks was found to have been converted into ice during the night, and was thus unavailable for use till towards mid-day. At Zoula, on the contrary, the thermometer stood at 112 deg. in the tents.

The latest news from Magdala was exactly what everybody had been expecting to hear. Our friends the Abyssinians were already engaged in a desperate struggle for superiority, having now no Theodore against whom to husband their strength and unite their forces. A Galla chief—one of those released from chains on Easter Monday—had raised an army, charged upon, and completely defeated the Dejaz Mechecha's horse, taking the Dejaz himself prisoner. Wakshum Gobazye must ere now have regretted his hasty refusal to accept Magdala, when it was offered to him by Sir Robert Napier. The Gallas held it and his prime minister securely, and it seemed likely to cause him more trouble than he had bargained for to obtain possession of either.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ASHANGI, *May 5th.*

Arrangements for the embarkation of the troops at Zoula were all but complete in April. The first troops to embark were the 2nd and 18th N. I. and a company of the Marine Battalion. These were to take ship on May 10th; while the 12th Bengal Cavalry—the last regiment for which definite arrangements had been made—were to leave Zoula on June 4th. Two regiments of Native Infantry, most probably the 3rd and 25th, the Sappers and the Coolie and Army Works Corps would have to remain till all stores had been shipped. The 5th and 8th N. I. would have been appointed to this duty had they landed, which they never did.

His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief and Staff was expected to leave Zoula for Bombay in the frigate *Feroze*, about the 4th June: the *Octavia*, it was feared, could not then be available, having to leave for her monsoon station before that date. There was, however, even at this time, a strong probability of Sir Robert's going to England, which became more and more likely as Zoula was neared. The 3rd Dragoon Guards, A-21st R.A., B-21st R. A. (Mountain Train Batteries), and 4th King's Own were arranged to embark for Suez on the 27th of May, and the G-14th R.A., 10th Company Royal Engineers, and 33rd Foot, for the same port, on the 30th idem. The G-14th were, however, afterwards ordered to Nuggur by the Home Government. Guns, mules, and followers of the Mountain Train batteries were to proceed to Bombay, as also volunteers from the other regiments, and followers. Bengal and Punjab regiments were to go *via* Bombay; the Madras Sappers to proceed direct to their destination by steamer.

Senafe would, in effect, be the port of embarkation,

Zoula being merely used as the bunder. The marches from Senafe were to be:—from Senafe to Undal, Undal to Sooroo, Sooroo to Koomaylee, and thence to the pier-head at Zoula by rail. Regiments were to leave Senafe at 4 P. M., reaching Rarayguddy at 7 P. M., where tea would be ready for them, the march to be continued at 2 A. M. At 2 A. M. next morning they would start for Sooroo, and thence, at the same hour on the following morning, for Koomaylee, where they could easily arrive at 6 A. M. and take train to Zoula, embarking at seven. Breakfasts, dinners, teas, &c. were ordered to be ready for the men by their arrival at Undal and Sooroo, breakfasts at Koomaylee, and dinners on board their respective transports. Orders were despatched from Dildee for the erection of standing camps at the stations in the Pass; and every two men were to have a mule or other suitable animal provided for them on which to ride between Senafe and Koomaylee. Beyond Senafe, therefore, the expedition might assume some slight resemblance to "a grand military picnic" (as it had so erroneously been termed), except to officers of the Quarter Master General's and Commissariat Departments. But, it was yet "a far cry to Loch Awe," and the above elaborate arrangements were never carried out in anything approaching entirety.

The Head-quarters and first brigade arrived at Dildee on the 29th of April, overtaking the second brigade, which had halted a day there. A day's halt was necessary for both brigades, in order that officers and men might have time to recover and re-arrange their kit, which having been abandoned at Lat, had been brought thus far to meet them. I say to recover their kit; but it would be more correct to say—to recover as much of their kit as possible, for no small portion of it was missing. It may have been lost *en route*, or the Pioneer Force and the second brigade may have been allowed to help themselves, on the principle of "first come,

best served." Still it was an unspeakable comfort again to find one's-self the joint occupant of a tent with another, or two others at most, instead of being cribbed, cabined, and confined with a dozen, or being compelled to pass a miserable existence in an extemporized *tente d'abri*, pervious both to wind and wet. A change of clothing, too, did not come amiss; for, after six weeks' tear and wear, the best of raiment is apt to exhibit unmistakeable marks of the march and the bivouac.

The Dildee depôt was likewise well supplied with all the luxuries of the season—viz., tea, sugar, vegetables, tobacco, and, in the name of the Prophet, pickles! Dildee, so far as our experiences of it go, is a place the climate of which hovers constantly between smiles and tears. At one time the sun shines joyously out from between the clouds: anon his rays are obscured by fleeting showers, while the hoarse murmur of distant thunder falls upon the ear from beyond the surrounding hills. It may be remembered that these, in an intensified form, were precisely the circumstances under which we saw Dildee for the first time. The Telharee, on either side of which the camp was situated, is a fine stream. It supplied man and beast with abundance of excellent water, and artistes with an unlimited choice of fine scenery.

It may not be amiss to state in connection with the above, that the public will in all probability have before long an opportunity of procuring a collection of Abyssinian views in a more enduring form than the pages of the illustrated London papers. There were in the 10th Company of Royal Engineers a party of photographers, who secured photographs, or photographed sketches, of most of the places of interest or difficulty along the route. These photographers were sent out specially to photograph plans of the route, camps, entrenchments, &c., a landscape lense being added as a sort of extra, in order that they might

secure a view or two, should, perchance, opportunity offer. The men, being enthusiastic in their profession, sought opportunities of enlarging their collection and making it so valuable as not only to deserve but demand publication in England. Their views included Annesley Bay, from six different points, the Pass, Senafe, Addigerat Tower, Goona Goona and church, Antalo village and church, Ashangi, Islamgee, Selassie and Fahla, showing Arogee valley, views in and around Magdala, photographs of Abyssinian church decorations, an Abyssinian fiddler, the Abyssinian captives, the Queen of the Gallas, Theodore, from a sketch after death, and others too numerous to mention. The plans were of interest chiefly to the military authorities, but might well have a place in any collection that might appear. Additions to the views were being made daily; and it is to be hoped the public will not lose sight of their claim to have the collection placed within their reach.

The health of the European portion of the Force continued excellent; that of the native portion—the followers more particularly—was not so. Every day four or five muleteers or dhoolie-wallahs succumbed to fever, dysentery, rheumatism, or old age. They did not, of course, die off, as they might have done; but went to hospital—a very much more serious matter, as sick carriage was far from plentiful. Moreover, the native would not ride a mule; he seemed to be sick, more of the sight of that animal than from disease or physical infirmity; a dhoolie or hammock had to be provided for him somehow. Hard work, exposure, irregular diet, bad food and water abundantly accounted for this; indeed it was surprising that the number of sick was not greater than it actually was. But at the same time, the present percentage was sufficient to cause no small anxiety to the medical officers. On the march up, the sick could be left behind at the various depôts,—a plan

of disposing of them which could not now be adopted; on the contrary, such of them as had not recovered had to be carried along with the Force. Thus the sick list received some accession at every depôt, besides the daily casualties.

To make matters worse for the first brigade, the second, which preceded it, had no compunction about carrying off the sick-carriage, while it left its sick behind it to be cared for by the brigade that followed. It was evident that unless good and abundant food should conduce to effect an improvement, it would be necessary to extemporise stretchers for the public followers, and to entertain Abyssinians to carry them. It was very fortunate that the establishments were so severely cut down at the commencement of the campaign; for, had the Force been encumbered with its regulation following now, it would have been almost impossible to move at all.

The Pioneer Force and the second brigade were one stage beyond Ashangi on the 3rd of May; the Head-quarters and first brigade would, on the 4th, reach the southern extremity of the lake. Though, as will be seen, the return of the Force was progressing as rapidly as could reasonably be expected, the last march or two reminded us very strongly of the fact that large brigades with hundreds of mules cannot, under any circumstances, be moved in such a country as Abyssinia without an infinite amount of labour and trouble. The comparative facility with which the Force was moved across the open plateaus of Wadela and Dalanta had almost banished from memory the delays, mishaps, and worries entailed by the mountains of Lasta and Wojerat; consequently, now that we had re-entered the hilly country, we had again to become habituated to the many and varied drawbacks and difficulties inseparable from marching therein, and to learn afresh to bear with equanimity the frailties of mules and the breaks down of baggage.

The march from Dildee to Morawur was one of the hard-

est lessons in this direction to which the Force had yet been called upon to submit. It will be remembered that these nineteen miles entailed much hardship and privation upon a great part of the first brigade a month ago, many having been compelled to bivouac on the road side, and others to make shift without food or shelter at Dildee, in consequence of the non-arrival of provisions and baggage. Since then the road had been mightily improved, leading to the general expectation, or at any rate affording ground to hope, that these hard experiences would not be repeated.

But if the condition of the road was improved, that of the mules had most decidedly deteriorated, and the result was pretty much the same as on the previous occasion. The column, it is true, reached Morawur in good time; but much of the baggage was out all night, and the rearguard did not arrive till half-past four next afternoon. The wildest tentative measures were resorted to by the brigade authorities every other morning, with a view to economise the time usually lost at starting, and to prevent the muddles arising at every little rise or acute angle, where all was not the plainest of sailing. On the morning in question (viz., that on which the brigade left Dildee) the field hospital was detained till all the mules had left the ground, lest the line of march should be encumbered, and progress retarded by the "ferocious dhoolies."

The consequence of this sapient measure was that the sick were without adequate attendance, food, or shelter the whole live-long day, from nine o'clock in the morning till ten at night! Nor did it appear that the mules were much benefited by the precedence assigned to them, many having been thirty hours on the road, and many never having reached camp at all. More than sixty either died or had to be destroyed. What remedial or ruinous measure might suggest itself next, it was impossible to conceive. It was very unfortunate, but it was very evident, that the trans-

port animals were unequal to long marches, especially on the very short commons of two pounds of grain and five pounds of grass *per diem*. More than that it had till recently been impossible to obtain for them. From Morawur to Lat the road was neither very long nor very weary, so that all arrived there before dark.

Another and new annoyance experienced by the baggage train arose from the rapacity of the Gallas, who were now wholly given to plunder. Every measure of conciliation had failed; nothing would induce them not to lay violent hands upon mules and their loads whenever the shadow of an opportunity presented itself—for "'tis their nature too." Unarmed except with the sword and spear, they kept aloft on the hills, from which they hurled down rocks and stones on the passing column, as soon as the shades of evening closed around. Several attacks upon a few isolated mules had lately been reported, in one of which they were pounced upon by a party of Punjab Pioneers, who shot a couple of them. Other native troops seemed to manifest their presence of mind in similar circumstances, either by not firing at all, or by missing when they did fire. It was considered highly probable that an example might have to be made of villages notorious for harbouring bandits; possibly Wulda Yessoos might also be taken to task for his share in these and other depredations. Having mentioned this chief's name, it may be added that Kassa of Tigre failed to reduce him to submission. Kassa's brother attacked Amba Alaji to no purpose, and returned to Antalo.

But for occasional thunder showers, by no means heavy, the weather experienced by the Force since it crossed the Taccazzé, had been all that could be desired—a great change from the bitterly cold days and colder nights of Dalanta. A great change, too, had come over the face of Lasta and Wofila during the past month. The voice of spring and the frequent rains had called forth leaf and

flower on tree and shrub. Fields which, when we last crossed them, were brown and bare, were now covered with the greenest of wheat and barley; the tender herb was springing up abundantly on mountain and in valley;

> "And creeping shrubs of thousand dyes,
> "Waved in the west wind's summer sighs."

Scores of little warblers that were unseen and unheard in the end of February, now flitted from tree to tree, making every bush voluble, and every hillside resonant of their song.

The majority of the army were not in all probability enthusiastic naturalists, or devotedly given to admiration of the beautiful, whether it might be exemplified in the moral or the physical world; so fragrant flower and melodious note may not have appealed forcibly either to their optic vision or to their intellectual sense. Yet these changes could not be without some effect for good, for it was impossible but that both mind and body should experience less fatigue from marching through a smiling and fertile country, than is the case when everything, as far as the eye can reach, is sombre and uninteresting.

Moreover, the season had brought us other changes. The road which, after the removal of stones and other obstacles, was covered ankle-deep with dust over nearly its whole length, had now passed the stage of puddle and daub, and become a fine beaten path on which men and animals could walk with some degree of comfort. The foregoing remarks are applicable not only to Wofila and Lasta, but, in a great degree, to the country north of Ashangi—Wojerat, Enderta, and Haramat.

The health of the European troops continued to be very good—better than in Indian cantonments. From the returns of the Principal Medical Officer, British Forces, made up to the 30th of April, it appeared that of the 2,150 Europeans in the Advance Force, 3·9 was the average on the sick list up to the above date. An improvement was

expected soon to manifest itself among the followers, considering the change for the better in rations and weather.

It may interest some to know that the lady whom Theodore chose for himself from Yedjou reached the place of her nativity in safety. Being Theodore's favourite and petted by him, she naturally felt his loss; but at the same time expressed the sense of the deepest kindness shown her by Sir Robert Napier. The real Queen, the daughter of Ubie, was still in camp.

To obviate the inconveniences arising from marching in brigades in a country so mountainous and deficient in roads as Abyssinia, it was arranged at Ashangi that the brigades should be broken up into small columns. It had hitherto been found impossible to do this, in consequence of the want of Commissariat officers and subordinates. It will not be considered wonderful that long and frequent stoppages should have occurred on the march, and that there should often have been late arrivals, when it is remembered that the line of each brigade extended over a distance of *seven miles*, even when the mules were following closely the one upon the other. Seeing that they seldom did this, it is no exaggeration to say that at least ten miles intervened between the advance guard and the rear guard of the column in motion.

At Antalo, however, the Force was to be split up into six columns, according to the following distribution :—

On the 9th of May, General Collings was to leave Antalo with the garrison at present there. The native general hospital at Antalo, under Dr. Maitland, with six followers, &c., accompanied this column.

On the 11th idem, Major Briggs, being senior officer in General Collings' brigade, was ordered to leave, in command of a wing of the 23rd Punjab Pioneers, the Scinde Horse, B-21st R.A., and the 3rd and 4th Companies of Bombay Sappers.

On the 12th idem, General Wilby was to leave in command of the 23rd Regiment, wing 23rd Punjab Pioneers, and 12th Bengal Cavalry. Dr. Wyllie's field hospital, with wounded, accompanied this column.

On the 13th, Colonel Wallace had orders to leave with the G-14th R.A., 8-inch mortars, and 45th regiment, the European depôt hospital, under Staff Surgeon Webb, accompanying the column.

On the 14th, Colonel Field would proceed to Zoula, in command of the Naval Brigade, 3rd Light Cavalry, wing 10th N. I., and 2nd Company Bombay Sappers. Dr. Straker's field hospital accompanied this column, and so did Major-General Sir Charles Staveley.

On the 15th, General Schneider was to bring up the rear with the 3rd Dragoon Guards, 4th Foot, Beloochees, and 10th Bengal Cavalry. Staff Surgeon Madden's field hospital accompanied the column; so also did the Commander-in-Chief and Head-quarters.

The sick of the European and native corps in the depôt hospital at Antalo, joined their respective corps on arrival there. Small as the number of sick had happily been, it had often been a difficult matter to make adequate provision for them, in consequence of scarcity of medical subordinates and hospital attendants. The hospital equipment, too, with the exception of that supplied to one regiment, was the worst ever seen on field service. For this the Force was indebted to the Bombay Commissariat.

In the anticipation that a day's halt would certainly be made at Ashangi, a proposal was set on foot by a number of officers whose energy and that of their horses had not been exhausted by the campaign, to institute races and athletic sports, for which the more solid part of the meadow skirting the lake afforded a fair field. As it happened, however, the energy of the mules had not been severely taxed by the last two marches, so no halt was made; the

brigade marched on Mukhan next morning. The column having reached Ashangi by ten o'clock in the forenoon, the day was devoted to scientific and other pursuits. An India-rubber boat, duly inflated, was paddled half-across the lake, in order that its depth might be ascertained by sounding. Contrary to expectation, the lake turned out to be shallow, the greatest depth found being only seventeen fathoms, whereas it was generally supposed from the nature of the ground around, that it must be nearer a hundred fathoms. The lake seemed to be flat-bottomed, the basin dipping gently towards the south-east, as do the strata of the surrounding hills. A few yards from the shore at the north-west corner, a depth of thirteen fathoms was obtained, which gradually increased towards the centre, affording reason to believe that the depth on the Wofila and Galla sides is considerably greater.

A number of experiments in gunnery was also made, chiefly with a view to get rid of a large quantity of cumbrous ammunition, and to show the congregated Gallas with what manner of persons they had been meddling. The Rocket Battery fired a few hundred rockets at different elevations, some being fired so as to obtain the maximum range, and others so as to display the ricocheting tendencies of these novel projectiles. Shower after shower of these rockets, skimming along the surface of the water for a distance of near two miles, was esteemed a pyrotechnic display of no ordinary grandeur by others besides the Gallas.

Colonel Penn's mountain guns were likewise exhibited, shell and shrapnel being fired in order that Colonel Milward, that enthusiastic and eminent artillerist, might ascertain whether the particular fuses used would be extinguished on the shell striking the water, or whether, as he hoped, it would continue to burn, causing the shell to explode after the ricochet. The gallant Colonel's wish was gratified on

every occasion. The space swept by the shell and shrapnel on bursting was also finely shown on the water, and was greater than many had expected to find it. The 4th King's Own also exhibited their prowess with the Snider. There is reason to believe that the Gallas were duly impressed with all they saw; for on Sir Robert's pointing to their hills and asking upon which of the villages they would like the fire directed, they seemed horribly shocked at the idea.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ANTALO, *May 14th.*

After ten days' continuous marching,—for the force had nowhere halted beyond a night since it left Morawur,—the Commander-in-Chief and head-quarters reached Antalo on the 12th of May. At Antalo a short halt was necessary, chiefly in order to allow the troops to proceed in smaller columns than before, and thus disencumber the line of march by distributing it over a greater extent of road. The delay was by no means protracted, however, as the last column started for Senafe on the 15th. It was hoped, and expected, that marching would be attended with less difficulty in future than it had been for some time past, as we had now emerged from the region of mountain peaks and forests, which intercepted and condensed every cloud charged with moisture that happened to come their way.

From the 5th to the 8th of May, during which period the route lay through a very mountainous and difficult tract of country, it rained every night without intermission —at Ashangi rain, Haya rain, Mukhun rain, Belago rain. Dense fogs, too, which the sun's rays were for a long time powerless to dispel, enshrouded the hills and over-hung

the camp every morning, rendering tents and clothing, if possible, more wet than the rain had made them over night, charging the atmosphere with fever, influenza, and rheumatism, and making everything as comfortless and cheerless as it is well possible to conceive. Taxed as the transport animals would have been under any circumstances, to ascend these ghauts, it became almost an impossibility to drag them along when weighted with drenched kit and deprived of a firm footing by a thick layer of slime on the path.

It was at Belago that the discomfort of the troops reached its highest pitch. At that ill-favoured place all the precautions which wisdom and previous unpleasant experience could suggest, were not sufficient to stem the torrents which flowed through almost every tent. Trenches, dams, and other irrigation works were alike unavailing, and in the morning the majority of the Force found themselves a couple of inches under water. But there had been no reason to complain of the weather during the past few days; Antalo bade fair to retain the enviable reputation it had acquired.

These rains which prevailed between Ashangi and Attala seem to have been general all over the country. At and below Senafe they had certainly been more heavy than was usual at that season of the year, and reports came also from the west and south telling of valleys watered and crops refreshed in the most unexpected manner—blessings which the Abyssinians gratefully attributed to the presence of the English in their country. As last year's monsoon was very scanty, there was some reason to expect an early and abundant one this year; but no one supposed that these rains were the commencement of the much and justly dreaded season, though they might be premonitory of its approach.

Unfortunately, however, repeated disasters befel the

Senafe ghat and Sooroo Pass, the latter of which, the telegraph reported, had twice been rendered utterly impassable. Five companies of Sappers (the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Bombay, and the G and H companies Madras) were now, or would soon be, on the spot to effect repairs, as soon as any future flood should have passed, so that no serious delay in the embarkation could be anticipated.

Telegrams from Her Majesty the Queen, from H. R. H. the Duke of Cambridge, and from Sir Stafford Northcote were received at Antalo by Sir Robert Napier, complimenting him and his Army on the brilliant success which had attended their operations in Abyssinia. These compliments were conveyed to the troops in the following General Orders :—

" *Camp Antalo*, 12*th May* 1868.

" The Commander-in-Chief has the highest satisfaction in conveying to the Army of Abyssinia the following message received this day by telegraph.

" Sir Robert Napier heartily congratulates all under his command on this flattering recognition of their services by Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria :—

" ' The Queen sends hearty congratulations and thanks to ' Sir Robert Napier and his gallant force on their ' brilliant success.' "

" *Camp Antalo*, 12*th May* 1868.

" The Commander-in-Chief has much satisfaction in publishing to the troops under his command the following messages received by telegraph from His Royal Highness the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, and from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India respectively :—

" ' We all rejoice in your great success, and in that of ' your gallant and enduring army.'

"'I congratulate your Excellency with all my heart. 'You have taught us once more what is meant by an 'army that can go anywhere and do anything. From 'first to last all has been done well. I must ask leave 'for a motto. My own suggestion would be *Qualis ab* '*incepto.*'"

The echo from India either never reached Abyssinia or was never published there, but had it come, it would doubtless have been equally joyous and hearty with that just wafted from England.

In connection with the above, it may be interesting to know that the lucky bearer to England of the Commander-in-Chief's formal despatches, was Colonel Milward, R.A., the officer who came out in charge of the steel mountain guns, and whose services with this Expedition, as well as his former career, eminently entitled him to the distinction conferred upon him by Sir Robert Napier, and to the professional advantages which might accrue therefrom. Colonel Milward was also entrusted with Theodore's crown and royal seal, for conveyance to Her Majesty.

Many readers of these letters have doubtless seen the photograph of a sketch of Theodorus taken as he lay by the inner gate of Magdala, immediately after the entrance was forced. The talented artist was Mr. Holmes, of the British Museum, who accompanied the Expedition as archæologist, and whose wonderful talent with the pencil and brush has already been noticed. It will be interesting to know that the accuracy of the likeness was testified to by Dr. Lumsdaine, who held a *post-mortem* examination on Theodore's body; by Captain Speedy, who knew his late Majesty well; and by Mr. Rassam. Dr. Lumsdaine says:—"The sketch is *wonderfully* like; and in looking "at it I can almost fancy I am again looking upon the "face over which I was bending for nearly one whole "hour this morning. * * I can't speak to the *life* like-

"ness; but, as the man who saw most of the *dead* face, I "can only repeat that you have caught the likeness "wonderfully." Captain Speedy says:—"It is wonder- "fully like both what Theodore was some years ago when I "knew him, and also what he was when I saw him dead "yesterday. I have shown the portrait to several of his "chiefs, and they all instantly recognised the likeness." Mr. Rassam says—"The likeness is remarkably true. It is very "like Theodorus when he used to be in good humour."

Those who have fully realised the gravity of the inconvenience, privation, and delay caused by the breakdown of the Abyssinian transit at Attala, will not be uninterested to know how it happened that the author of the mischief escaped punishment. The necessary withdrawal of the troops to the front from the country between Attala and Ashangi, and the non-arrival of the brigade expected from Bombay, left the carriers almost entirely at the mercy of the robber chiefs whose ambas overlook every mile of the road. These men, friendly enough as long as the wing of a regiment and a squadron of a horse kept the marches, immediately betook themselves to their old ways when the garrisons were reduced to "a naique and six" for postal duty.

The most powerful, and one of the most unscrupulous, of these chiefs was Wulda Yessoos, who was therefore generally regarded as being the prime mover in these raids, whereas he ought to have been a terror to evil-doers, and the praise and protection of such as did well. It was well known that Sir Robert Napier was by no means disinclined to do unto Amba Alaji as he had done unto Magdala, if only it could be proved that robbery and murder had been hatched and nurtured there. No one thought that proof would be difficult, or that Wulda Yessoos would come to judgment provided with a good defence; so a few hours' cannonading and a grand display of rocket practice were looked upon as certain.

But Wulda Yessoos had somewhat to say why judgment should not be passed upon him. He stood charged with having deprived the Abyssinian carriers of their hire, and thereby led to a general strike; of having harboured and encouraged robbers and murderers; and of having prevented the influx of grain and flour from the surrounding country.

To the first count of the indictment Wulda Yessoos pleaded guilty, but pleaded also justification; these carriers were his subjects, and he merely demanded tithes from them in accordance with the custom of his country. If this led to the failure of General Merewether's convention, none so sorry as he, who never foresaw or suspected such a result. To the second count he pleaded not guilty —a plea which received considerable support from the fact that the most important witness for the prosecution was proved to have himself stolen nearly forty Transport Train mules and a few muleteers—all of which Wulda took from him and restored to the transport officer at Attala. As regarded the question of supplies, he proved that the stoppage occurred in his absence, he having been compelled to flee from Prince Gooksa, Kassa's brother, who attacked him and ravaged his country, notwithstanding his sovereign's promise to the contrary made to Sir Robert Napier. A verdict of "Not proven" had, therefore, to be returned on all the counts.

Great as was the disappointment to many, it was perhaps just as well, for had one single man been lost in the demolition of Amba Alaji—a mere accident in connection with the campaign—the reduction of the fortress would have been dearly bought.

Having now had an opportunity of comparing the four native cavalry regiments forming part of the army of Abyssinia, as well as of hearing the opinions entertained by others regarding them, it may not be amiss to devote a paragraph

to a review of these four regiments—the Sind Horse, 3rd Bombay Cavalry, the 10th and 12th Bengal Cavalry.

All native Indian cavalry are now, as is well known, on the silladar or irregular system, though the number of bargheers allowed to native officers, non-commissioned officers and men, varies in the different regiments. Bargheers, it may be mentioned, are men enlisted, fed, clothed, and mounted by another man in the regiment, who draws their pay and allowances, only giving them a certain stipulated proportion, and who is held responsible for the bargheer and his equipment. The Sind Horse had the largest proportion of bargheers, the 3rd Bombay Cavalry the next; the Bengal regiments were almost entirely free of them, except that the native officers were allowed to retain one or two one-horse silladars. Indeed the proportion of bargheers among the Sind Horse was unduly large, and interfered materially with the efficiency of the regiment on foreign service. The bargheer did not take sufficient care of his horse when away from his silladar—hence frequent cases of dismounting. Besides, the stamp of the bargheer was very different from that of the silladar.

The Bengal regiments were composed of far better men than the two others, as they could, recruiting nearer the men's own homes, obtain the first pick as it were, and secure the services of many whose local position would prevent their going to another presidency. All Bengal regiments, too, recruit from a superior class, as can readily be seen in the bearing of the men.

The 3rd Bombay Cavalry had unquestionably the best horses, for which the regiment had in a great measure to thank its commanding officer, Colonel Graves, who is really a first-rate judge of horses; the Sind Horse had the worst. The Light Cavalry were principally mounted on horses purchased in Bombay; the Sind Horse on country-breds, picked up at a low figure on the frontier. Many of

them were old and used up when they landed, and ought never to have been embarked for foreign service. The Bengal regiments were mounted, some on stud-breds, some on country-breds, the former of which had been bred for size rather than for blood and power of endurance, so necessary on service.

The best style of horse apparently is the Arab, or Persian and Arab crossed, which latter can be bought in Bombay at a reasonable price. It is evident that the horses supplied to the old regular cavalry were far superior to those now in use, and there are few who do not hold the opinion that Government ought again to buy remounts, giving them over to regiments at a valuation.

There is also great variety in the dress, arms, and accoutrements of those regiments. The dress adopted by the Bengal regiments was the best and neatest. It consisted of a kind of loose blouse, with no collar, opening down the front, and fastened round the waist with a broad cummerbund, the colour of the facings of the regiment. The head-dress was a large puggree, with the conical cap usually worn by Pathans. Their belts were of brown leather. The uniform of the 3rd Light Cavalry was a bad imitation of that of the regular army, and totally unsuited to natives. The Sind Horse costume, with the exception of their fur overcoat, was unsightly and unsuited to a mounted soldier. All had jack-boots (many of them badly made and fitted) and hunting spurs. The spurs of the 3rd Light Cavalry were the best being of brass, and of good shape and pattern.

The spears of the 10th Bengal Lancers (Hodson's Horse) were first-rate, as also were their swords, but their pistols were indifferent and were soon to be replaced. The arms of the other Bengal regiment were bad; the double-barrelled carbines of the Sind Horse were the best fire-arms of any.

Bengal excelled in saddlery—principally made at Cawnpore and Meerut. They had apparently hit upon a useful kind of saddle and bridle. Their saddles nearly resembled the ordinary hunting saddle, with brass mounts and double leathers where there is extra wear; bridle, the ordinary Nolan, very similar to that in use in the home cavalry, but with a single bit, suited to the mouth of the horse. There was a slight variation in the different patterns; but this was allowed in order to secure utility before uniformity. All had the standing martingale, but very loose, so that while it prevented the horse from throwing up its head and annoying its rider, it did not interfere with the pace. There was just sufficient ornament to take away plainness of appearance without overburdening the saddlery. The saddlery of the 3rd Light Cavalry had been good when new, but very heavy and hard work had now left its mark upon it. It is difficult to say what the Sind Horse saddlery was, being a mixture of European and native, with a preponderance of the latter, and the shabracque served as a cover for all sorts of odds and ends which would not be allowed to be carried on a horse if seen. No doubt the Sind Horse are well suited for work on the Sind frontier; but they are behind the age and not up to the requirements of modern warfare. This much must be said for the regiment, however, it did a great deal of very hard work, and was always ready for any service, no matter what hardship it might entail, and no matter how exhausted both men and horses.

There are many points in connection with the native Indian cavalry which demand immediate attention, as, for instance, the advisability of having one uniform system throughout India, the necessity for having a good veterinary surgeon attached to each regiment, recruiting, mounting, and officering. Colonels Graves and Loch of the 3rd Light Cavalry are capital officers, and as zealous as could

be desired; Major Gough, of the 12th Bengal Cavalry, and Major Pallisser, of the 10th, are both smart young officers, as they should be; for cavalry without dash are nothing. An excellent opportunity for comparing notes was afforded to the different commanding officers by the campaign: the best regiment may often receive a valuable hint from one inferior to it in most respects.

Of the forty-five elephants landed in Abyssinia, three had died and two had been shot. Two died near the Beshilo, soon after the fall of Magdala; two were shot, and one died at Belago, on the return march. Two others were very shaky; but as the Armstrongs were on their wheels again, rest and better feeding enabled the poor *hutties* to reach Zoula in an improved condition. They were faithfully and skilfully tended by Lieutenant Ochterlony, or they would never have endured the excessively hard work to which it was necessary to put them.

Great as was the strain put upon the Quartermaster General's and Transport departments by the hurried embarkation of troops, animals, and stores, no difficulty was at present anticipated. Fortunately the former of these departments could get through an immense amount of work creditably, and with surprising facility. In proof of this, it is only necessary to enumerate the departments working under the Quartermaster General's. These were land transport, railway, telegraph, photographers and signallers, well-sinkers, trigonometrical survey, post office, building, &c., in addition to the work of the department proper. This did not escape the notice of the Secretary of State for India, who specially thanked Captain Holland for his excellent and untiring services, and ordered a copy of the letter conveying his thanks to be forwarded for the information of the Bombay Government. Captain Holland was from the first Quartermaster General of the Army in everything but in name; the officer

who was nominal Quartermaster General never did a day's work, nor shared an hour's responsibility in connection with the proper duty of the post.

Captain Tryon considered that he had tonnage sufficient for all troops, stores, and 5,000 mules. At least six miles of the railway would not repay retransport, having pretty well done its work before its removal to Abyssinia; the remaining five miles would, it was thought, be left on the ground till the cold weather, when a party could be sent from Aden to remove it. The telegraph wire and insulators were conveyed to the coast for embarkation.

Neither was difficulty anticipated from the water supply. Lieutenant LeMessurier, R.E., had gone to Koomaylee to see after the water required for the large number of animals arriving there. Water pipes were being laid from Koomaylee to the railway terminus—three-quarters of a mile—and other measures being adopted to keep Zoula well supplied. Four hundred and twenty tons of water could now be stored at Zoula in tanks, and arrangements were being made to add storage for at least two hundred tons more. The consumption at present was one hundred tons a day, but this could have been greatly reduced by limiting each individual's daily allowance to say a gallon and a half —a quantity which would be considered more than ample by those who experienced the privations of the week before Magdala.

The following memorandum of casualties amongst the British troops from the date of their landing in Abyssinia in December 1867 to 13th May 1868, was courteously supplied by Dr. Currie, principal medical officer with the Force. Seven officers and twenty-five men had died. Of the officers, two met violent deaths—Captain Benson having been drowned on the passage between Bombay and Aden, and Colonel Dunn accidentally shot at Senafe. Two of the men also met violent deaths. Distribution of

these casualties by locality gives the following :—Below Senafe, two officers and eight men; on the highlands, five officers and seventeen men. Sixty-five per cent. of the deaths resulted from dysentery. Dr. Currie had not yet been able to procure an accurate return of the total sickness.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SENAFE, *May 24th.*

At last the conviction forced itself upon the Force that it was nearing Zoula. Hitherto it had been difficult to realize that our faces were really homeward, and that each difficult march brought us so many weary miles nearer our destination. Antalo did certainly bear a homely and familiar look about it; but then we were again lost in the monotony of the small stations between it and Addigerat—Eikhullut, Dolo, Dongolo, &c.—of which few actually knew the relative positions.

But about Senafe and the Pass there could be no mistake. As the impressions of the country gathered there were the first, so they were the most vividly remembered; and no one but could now picture to himself every turning that intervened between him and Annesley Bay. To have attempted any such mental exercise fifty or a hundred miles back would have been the height of folly; consequently there had remained till now what was virtually an unknown tract of country—an indefinite expanse of road, to be traversed before we could reach Zoula. In the gladness of the moment, the existence of a Sooroo Pass was all but forgotten, and those who did sometimes bethink themselves that it *might* possibly yet cause trouble, religiously kept their fears to themselves, lest they should be voted inveterate "croakers."

So every one felt at last that the Expedition was over, and recalled to mind that was just four months, less one day, since Sir Robert Napier started from Zoula, and the Expeditionary Army was really set in motion. Of these events of the past four months how very few were now remembered without an effort; and these few were all pleasant reminiscences. The mind of man has mercifully been so constituted as to retain a vivid recollection of the green spots of one's existence, while hardships and privations produce only but a temporary impression and are soon forgotten. So now, the toilsome days, the cold cheerless nights, the doubts, the fears, the agonizing hopes of the past, were remembered only as a dream, while the grand success of the Expedition was clung to and cherished as an actual ever-present fact.

The head-quarters and fifth or last column of the Expeditionary Force left Antalo on the 15th of May, and having marched on without halt for nine consecutive days, an enigma to the peoples of Abyssinia, reached Senafe on the 24th. During these nine days everything contributed to further and facilitate the return of the troops. The weather continued fine, and the road was all that could have been desired. Baggage animals, too, had stood splendidly to their work, improving in condition as they advanced. At the same time, it was exceedingly fortunate that Senafe was not four days' march farther off, for sore backs, from constant work, would soon have disabled a large proportion of the Train.

I have said that the English army was an enigma to the Abyssinians—more insoluble now because of its victory, than during its southward march. It was an extraordinary thing, an unheard of phenomenon, that an army should march four hundred miles through a foreign country, against a terrible foe, enriching every village along its route, yet never boasting of what it could do, and would

do, on meeting its enemy; and now that success of the most brilliant kind had crowned its arduous and dangerous enterprise, the army was marching back again as complacently and quietly as ever. Where were the bloody shirt, the brandished spear, the proud boast, the cruel mockery and rejoicing with which warriors had from time immemorial celebrated their victory and prowess in Abyssinia? They were sought for in the English army in vain. Verily these English were extraordinary Christians; they performed unheard of feats of valour, yet boasted not of them, and—drank coffee!

Accustomed hitherto to associate valour with ferocity, the Abyssinians must surely henceforth associate it with extreme amiability; for they robbed us, and we heeded it not; they stole a few of the best horses in the Commander-in-Chief's body guard, yet knew not that our penal code prescribed a more severe punishment than "four dozen" lightly laid on. The cool impudence with which they seized and attempted to carry off articles, great and small, valuable and worthless alike, was exceedingly amusing, but, at the same time, it became exceedingly inconvenient and annoying.

Regarding the distribution of the Force, it will be sufficient to say that the whole was by this time at or below Senafe, and that, thanks to the indefatigable industry and the capacity for work of Major Roberts, V.C., at Zoula, the embarkation was proceeding without any interruption deserving of notice. It was now evident that unless the Sooroo Pass caused delay, a contingency which few took into serious account, every man would be in Zoula, or, at any rate, at Koomaylee, by the end of the month. Sir Robert Napier and Staff, as also the last of the troops, were to leave Senafe on the 28th instant.

Kassa was expected here in a day or two; but the delay was not for him, although all would be glad to see again,

and probably for the last time, the young prince who had proved himself a real friend, and whose reign had been distinguished, and his future brightened, by his short connection with England. The prince had deserved well of the English, and Sir Robert Napier was not the man to overlook or fail to acknowledge his deserts.

Among the presents intended for Kassa were fifteen hundred stand of arms, (the Brown Besses of the Punjabees, 3rd, 10th, and 25th N. I.), six mortars, and all spare powder and small arms ammunition, which should greatly strengthen his prestige, and increase his power throughout the whole of Abyssinia.

No material changes had been made in the plan of embarkation, only that the G-14th R. A., which expected to have returned to England direct from Zoula, had been ordered to India for another year, and were to be quartered at Nuggur. The 26th (Cameronians) were in orders for Calcutta, and the 45th for Madras, both regiments proceeding *viâ* Bombay. Such of the sick as were considered equal to the severities of Red Sea temperature would proceed to Suez in the hospital-ship *Mauritius*, and from Alexandria in the troop-ship *Simoom;* those for whom a long sea voyage was considered more suited would proceed round the Cape in the *Golden Fleece* and *Queen of the South.* The Indian troop-ships *Crocodile* and *Serapis* had long ago been granted by the Secretary of State for India for the use of the transport authorities; no answer to the application had yet been received from Calcutta, the authorities, perhaps, not yet having sufficiently recovered from their surprise at finding the 3rd Dragoon Guards ordered to England without their having been consulted in the matter, to attend to any request submitted to them through the Assistant Quarter Master General.

But no difficulty was anticipated regarding transport

for all troops, valuable stores, and as many as 5,000 mules, some of which last might, perhaps, be sent back to the Punjab, the rest being left in Bombay to be disposed of as to the Governor in his wisdom should seem good. The nine or ten thousand animals left in Abyssinia were entrusted to the care of M. Munzinger, who was to charge Government merely for the cost of a few herdsmen, and who would dispose of the stock on account of Government, receiving a small commission on the amount realized. The Mauritius and Bourbon Governments were expected to send for the more serviceable of the herd, and M. Munzinger would, everybody knew, do his best with the others.

The queen of the late Theodorus died in the English camp at Eikhullut, on the 15th instant. Her Majesty was the daughter of Ubie, and consequently nearly related to the ruling house and leading families of Tigre. These were very willing to receive their old favourite again among them ; but she preferred accompanying her son to Bombay, whither a regard for his safety and welfare induced her to send him. It was not at this time decided that the lad should be sent to England. Her Majesty had been in very delicate health for many years,—health which the persistent and studied unkindness of her unworthy husband did not tend to improve. She was quite a young woman of about twenty-four, and had been married eight years. She was greatly beloved by all the people, and many and genuine were the signs of grief displayed on account of her death. Her remains were interred in the church at Chelicut by the priests of the place, having been conducted out of camp with every mark of respect. Before the coffin, which was covered with a cloth of gold brocade, marched a funeral party of British soldiers furnished by the 4th King's Own, their band playing the "Dead march in Saul;" around flocked the

deceased's maids of honour, each weeping over some little trinket or article of clothing which had belonged to their mistress, and behind came the priests, praying and burning incense; her little son, led by Mr. Rassam; one of the Commander-in-Chief's aides-de-camp; several of his staff; and a crowd of Abyssinians. Never before were royal pair so buried in Abyssinia as were she and her husband.

Among the surmises and suggestions that had been made regarding the future of Abyssinia, now that Theodore was for ever off the stage, a party favoured the claims of Theodore's son Mechecha, against whom, it was said, no charge could be brought. Those who advised this, knew little of Mechecha. In the first place, he is one of Theodore's numerous illegitimate progeny; and in the next place, he is a drunken sot. The belief that Mechecha was popular, and that he was possessed of all the virtues, has no doubt been originated by Theodore's harsh treatment of him; but the belief is altogether a fallacy. He was seen at Magdala, and invited to speak with Sir Robert Napier; but his thirsty soul longed for arrack, he disappeared in quest of it, and was no more heard of. Illegitimate sons of Theodore with their fat mothers,—for which style of beauty his late Majesty seems to have had a *penchant*—were by no means rare; one or two were at Senafe.

Complimentary letters from all parts of England and India, from Cabinet Ministers, Horse Guards, War Office, and officials of every degree, continued to pour in by every mail. The jubilee was unmistakeably universal, as, indeed, it ought to have been; and the high appreciation of the cheerful manner in which the army had undergone the many and great privations entailed upon it, afforded reason to hope that some substantial recognition of these services would soon be forthcoming. It was agreed on all hands that a medal for the campaign and a clasp for

Magdala were certain; but these, in the estimation of not a few, were regarded as mere empty honour.

And while it was felt that a decoration of the kind would be most appropriate, again placing on record on the colours of several regiments, that the British army "can go anywhere, and do anything," it was felt too that it would neither meet the requirements of the case, nor satisfy the just expectations and deserts of the Force. Nothing less than six months' full batta would do this; indeed such a donation would not repay to officers and men the actual outlay which had been forced upon them during the campaign. Scarcely an officer but had lost or rendered useless a couple of valuable horses—some had lost more; men had been compelled to spend every penny of their hard-earned pay in the purchase of bread, flour, honey, and such other commodities as the country afforded—coarse enough and forbidding enough in all conscience, but yet rendered absolutely indispensible by the failure of Commissariat flour, rice, sugar, rum, and other necessaries of life. The earnings which ought to have been remitted to wife and children, or laid by to meet that figurative "rainy day" which a single ray of sunshine often refuses to illumine, were spent in the purchase of bread at twenty times its value—an arbitrary and extortionate rate which the purchaser had no means of correcting. Kits, too, had been destroyed or lost; and on many a previously robust frame and healthy constitution those cold days and killing nights in rain and sleet would yet exhibit their baneful effects, perhaps not many days hence.

The glorious and unexpected termination of the campaign, which might have been prolonged indefinitely, formed another strong argument on the side of the soldier, rather than tended to close the pocket of the nation. Again, there was the effect that a little timely liberality would

produce on the Indian army. The flower of that army had been in Abyssinia, and had done excellent service; how desirable then that it should be told from village to village, and from house to house, throughout the Punjab, Dera Ghazee Khan, Kohat, and Peshawur—*nutrices heroum*—that when Beloochee and Sikh toiled bravely and fought bravely for the Sirkar abroad, their fidelity and devotion were not forgotten, but called forth "much praise, and some reward beside."

There was, however, one department whose deserts were small. The postal service had from first to last been miserably inefficient, chiefly owing to the incompetency of the men sent to Abyssinia by the Bombay Post Office. Letters had gone astray, mails had been lost, or reached their destination in the most disgracefully delapidated condition, and all sorts of irregularities had occurred, because some of those in charge of the post-offices were either too careless, too lazy, or too stupid for the performance of even the most mechanical duties.

It is difficult to conceive what pleasure can be derived from reporting every trifling little incident that occurs in the interior economy of a regiment, and magnifying it into a matter of public interest and importance. Yet there are meddlesome persons whose constant object seems to be, to watch for every occurrence, however trifling, which shall enable them to represent the character of those in authority in an unfair and unfavourable light. There are no doubt some whose petty minds find such an employment congenial; but why should they not stick to the truth, seeing that in nine cases out of ten, the truth would answer the purpose just as well as a fabrication, and often better. The colouring and misrepresentation so often patent in such reports, completely frustrate the aim of the writer, as they at once suggest him to be either misinformed and unscrupulous, or, which is much more likely, an interested party.

A paragraph had just gone the rounds of the Indian papers, purporting to give a true account of an occurrence which took place in the Belooch Regiment at Sooroo, as far back as January last! Now this was precisely one of those cases which it was the height of bad taste to notice at all, and which would never have been referred to here, but for the gross manner in which the facts of the case were misrepresented, to the glorification of Dr. Boustead, the great cause of the squabble, and to the detriment of Major Beville, his commanding officer.

The Major was represented as having allowed his temper, and his haste to punish the doctor, to get the better of him in an amusing and ridiculous manner, and to his own discomfiture, while the shrewd medico came out of the *melee* with flying colours, and was made sanitary officer to the Force off-hand, a fine salary being granted as an alleviation for his ruthlessly wounded feelings.

Now the unvarnished facts of the case bear a very different complexion. Dr. Boustead was proved to have used most ungentlemanly and improper language to an officer of his regiment (Lieut. Beville) in the presence of two other officers wholly unconnected with the corps. For this conduct he very characteristically refused to apologise; and was very properly placed in arrest in consequence. So far from the proceedings having been forwarded to Head-quarters unsigned by Major Beville, they were never sent to Head-quarters at all, but on the facts of the case reaching the Commander-in-Chief's ears, through the Deputy Adjutant General, who was at Sooroo at the time, and who knew Dr. Boustead of old, the doctor was *removed* from the regiment, and sent back to the savoury post of sanitary officer at Zoula, under Dr. Lalor, while Major Beville was congratulated by several officers of His Excellency's Staff, on having got rid of an officer who, notwithstanding written promises to the contrary, had never ceased to be a thorn in

his side ever since he joined the regiment. The peculiar circumstances attending Dr. Boustead's transfer to that regiment will be in the recollection of many, and need not be recapitulated.

I say nothing about the over-stated salary of the sanitary officer; perhaps the few hundred rupees extra were thrown in to give the success the appearance of completeness, and to account for the doctor having remained quietly and comfortably at Zoula, while his regiment shared the dangers, hardships, and laurels of the front without him.

Dr. Boustead suddenly developed into a mighty elephant hunter. Unfortunately the extent of his feat, the magnitude of his danger, and his feelings on the occasion were not fully known till his own very graphic letter detailing them appeared in several papers.

CHAPTER XXIX.

KOOMAYLEE, *June 1st.*

His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, head-quarters, and rear-guard of the Force left Senafe on the 29th ultimo, and reached Koomaylee on the morning of the 1st of June. The Pass, which had been exceedingly fickle during the preceding week, one day practicable and the next day not, was found all that could be desired. Instead of being flooded, water was even scarce at Raray-Guddy, Undal, and Sooroo; the road was such as to establish its claim to be considered a great military work; and sanitation at the different stations, as well as along the route, had been rigorously and successfully carried out, in spite of the obstacles with which commanding officers and health officers had constantly to contend.

Sir Robert thus spent four days at Senafe; but they were far from being idle ones. A grand parade of the

troops on the highlands was held on the 25th of May in honour of Her Majesty's birthday, and Prince Kassa was received at a private conference in the afternoon; a public durbar was held on the 26th for the reception of the same prince; soldiers' games were honoured with His Excellency's presence on the 27th; a review of Kassa's troops, followed by a private durbar, was held on the 28th, and a formal leave-taking took place on the morning of the 29th.

The durbar of the 26th was chiefly interesting as being the occasion on which Kassa was formally and publicly rewarded for his services during the campaign. It is surely unnecessary at this time of day to enumerate or to point out the importance of the services rendered by this prince; the inestimable value of the Abyssinian carriage, the grain, flour, and other necessaries supplied at Senafe, Addigerat and Antalo must have been well understood long ago. Not an officer with the Force but acknowledged that Kassa had deserved well of us, having been a consistent and zealous friend throughout.

It should not be forgotten what efforts the Turks made at the commencement of the campaign to poison the Prince of Tigre's mind against the English, by misrepresenting the object of the Expedition and calling in question the truth and sincerity of every proclamation issued regarding it. I do not accuse the Turkish Government of having done this, or of having countenanced it; but that it was done by persons representing themselves to possess influence near the throne, has been ascertained from the best possible source. There are hangers-on of every Government, more particularly of every eastern Government, constantly on the outlook for opportunities favourable to the exercise of intrigue and adventure. They willingly undergo the risk of failure and exposure, knowing well that great will be their reward should their machinations result in the aggrandisement of the Government of which they

profess to be the servants and representatives. Egypt would have rejoiced to see the whole of Tigre in an attitude of hostility to the English, knowing well that Sir Robert Napier would soon exterminate the power of his enemies, or, in other words, win a fair and coveted province for the Porte.

Fortunately for himself and for us, Prince Kassa rejected the overtures made to him from Egypt and Turkey, determining to stand by the English. How far he may have been induced to do so by the two Tigreans educated at Bombay, Meertcha Workee and his brother Gabroo, and how much the nation owes to the Rev. Dr. Wilson on that account, it is impossible to say. The belief that in connection with the campaign in Abyssinia, England owes more to the Free Church of Scotland's Missionary Institution in Bombay than it does to any institution in the presidency, the Government itself and the Commissariat department not excepted, was entertained by not a few.

Kassa came to durbar attended by the twelve chiefs, who, in his opinion, had served him and the English most zealously; these had presents made them according to their rank and merit, and gave His Excellency assurances that they would support their master with all their power and all their substance. To the Prince himself were presented a sword, gun, and several other articles of use or ornament; but what gratified him most was the announcement that he was to receive the muskets and bayonets with which the Bombay and Punjab Infantry had been armed during the campaign, some 400,000 rounds of smooth-bore ammunition, a large quantity of gunpowder, several mortars and six-pounder guns, together with such mules and stores as might be left at Senafe.

For these presents His Highness expressed himself truly grateful; and, in answer to an indirect remark made by Sir Robert, expressed full confidence in his ability to hold

his own against all-comers, and his indebtedness to the English for his altered circumstances and increased power. To Sir Robert he gave his own gauntlet, spear, fur cloak, and horse, the last mentioned being led into the durbar tent by the grand-chamberlain of Tigre, and exhibited with due formality.

His Excellency, in acknowledging these presents, remarked that the spear was a very excellent weapon, but that he would advise His Highness henceforth to make good use of his guns in the day of battle—a piece of advice which two hours before would have seemed but mockery to the Abyssinians, seeing that their old matchlocks were by no means arms of precision. Kassa appeared to fear most from the Egyptians, who were, he said, encroaching "like a mist" upon his territory; now, however, thanks to his relations with the English, he did not regard their evident intentions with any degree of apprehension.

The Commander-in-Chief expressed a hope that His Highness would not forget his old friends, but write to them occasionally, not forgetting that Amharic scholars were few in India, and that it would be a great convenience would he have his letters indited in English. This led to the question of his sending a few young men, sons of his chiefs, to Bombay to be educated and taught what would be of use to themselves and their country. Without the least hesitation, the Prince expressed his readiness to do this, for, said he, he had learned how safe and wise it was to place full confidence in His Excellency and in the nation of which he was the representative. This was spoken with every appearance of sincerity, and not merely as a pretty compliment; so, unless His Highness's resolution may have been momentary, or the parental affection of his chiefs more warm than well-directed, Dr. Wilson may expect an early extension of his Abyssinian connection.

Aito Samuel, Theodore's agent with Mr. Rassam,

from whom the European captives experienced many kindnesses, was introduced to Kassa, and warmly commended to his protection. So also was a chief, who had been imprisoned in Magdala for his kindness to the Europeans. Kassa received them very graciously, and took the earliest opportunity of employing Aito Samuel on confidential service—viz. to accompany Sir Robert to Zoula in company with several other chiefs, to see and report upon the wonders of that port, and to convey to Tigre the guns and mortars intended for his new master.

The young Prince seemed really loth to say goodbye to His Excellency at the conclusion of the durbar; he shook hands warmly with General Merewether and such of the officers as he recognised, and expressed a hope that all the members of the Force whose acquaintance he had made would remember him in after days, and always think of him kindly.

It will be interesting to recount, almost in Sir Robert's own words, the circumstances which led to his presenting Prince Kassa, on the part of her Majesty the Queen, with a battery of mountain guns and mortars; and also with smooth-bore muskets.

Sir Robert does not enter into the causes of his having found himself, on reaching Zoula, compelled to look to local resources for the supply of commissariat and transport requirements, to an extent which he had not intended, and which these resources proved very inadequate to meet. All that he could then do was to try to develop to the utmost such sources of supply as were within reach. It will be remembered how important time was, and that a fortnight's delay, or even less, might have made the difference between the campaign being terminated before the rains or not. Owing in part to the ravages of locusts, the resources of Abyssinia had fallen so low that special efforts were needed before we could purchase what little

food it contained. This was one of other strong reasons which made it so desirable to establish friendly relations with Prince Kassa. How that was done has already been reported. During His Excellency's second interview with him at Mai Deeyab, he saw that the grain which Kassa had the day before promised to collect, would be furnished with all the more certainty if he had cause to expect some tangible acknowledgment of his services. He therefore informed His Highness that if he proved himself a true friend of Her Majesty, he would be rewarded in a way that would be useful to him in defending himself against his enemies, and that, although no promise could be given, yet it was very probable that guns suitable for mountain warfare would be given to him.

The effect of this assurance on the prospects of the expedition was at once apparent. Large quantities of wheat and barley, amounting to nearly 10,000 dollars' worth, were soon afterwards sent to His Excellency as a gift by the Prince himself, at a time when every load of flour was valuable to us; and the far more important supplies which, with his help, we were able to purchase in the province of Enderta, during our halt at Antalo, enabled the Force to advance beyond that position on the day it did. Therefore the assurance which Sir Robert conveyed to him at Mai Deeyab was as fully justified by the result as it seemed expedient at the time it was given. Moreover, the cordiality and completeness with which Prince Kassa entered into His Excellency's views by appointing some of his confidential chiefs as commissioners, with the commanders of the troops in Tigre, tended greatly to secure the peacefulness of our intercourse with the people.

But there is another view of this subject which is mentioned in Sir Robert's despatch. His Excellency thought the best hope of Abyssinia enjoying peace lay in its provinces remaining partitioned between at least two

distinct rulers. Many circumstances, independently of the great size of the country itself, and the geographical barriers which subdivide it, led him to hold his view. It is to be feared that any attempt on the part of one chief to take possession of all Abyssinia would not only lead to a long civil war, but would still leave room for a state of anarchy and disorder, if its object were attained. Looking at the positions of the two men now governing Tigre and Lasta, respectively, it does not appear likely that Kassa will ever attack Gobazye, unless carried away by too powerful chiefs, and only too probable that the ambition of Gobazye will extend itself to Tigre. Indeed Sir Robert suspects that one of the latter's motives in not coming to meet him was lest he should require from him a promise that he would not invade Tigre, which promise he was not prepared to make, or at all events to keep, and which, he feared, he might afterwards incur our resentment by breaking.

We had released from Magdala four Tigre chiefs who had enjoyed influence in their own country, under a former regime, and the Commander-in-Chief felt that not to have restored them to their homes would have exposed them to danger of destruction by the Gallas, or have driven them to seek refuge with Gobazye, who would have found in them useful agents in any designs against Kassa. In carrying them back with him, as he therefore did to Tigre, he knew that, though this course involved the lesser of two dangers, it might in the end prove a source of trouble to Prince Kassa. All that he could do towards securing for him that allegiance was attempted. During the durbar at Senafe they solemnly took oath before the Prince that they would be faithful to him, and Kassa as solemnly promised in return to afford them his protection. But this ceremony might or might not have the effect of restraining them from intrigues against him. Therefore Sir Robert's having restored them to a place in his domi-

nions seemed another reason why he should strengthen him against insurrection on their part.

The above are the principal considerations which, in addition to a wish to help to defend himself against enemies from without, seemed to His Excellency to warrant him in bestowing these arms on Kassa. To leave a ruler whom we had found just struggling into power, and whose first use of that power had been for our assistance, exposed to pressing dangers, when we could materially add to his means of self-defence by a gift which was as nothing compared with our own resources, was a course which would have been foreign to the characteristic policy of Great Britain towards weaker States, even if the hope of our acknowledging his services in this way had not previously been held out.

It was fully impressed upon Kassa and his chiefs at the durbar, that Her Majesty's object in thus befriending him was that he might the better protect himself against his enemies, and not to enable him to attack others. From all that was seen of him Sir Robert does not think that these guns will be used for wrong purposes, at least while Kassa has the power to prevent it. His Excellency thus did all that it seemed right to do in acknowledgment of very important services rendered to us, and to contribute to the means of defence of a little State to which we lay under obligation.

The soldiers' games, got up chiefly by Lieutenant Colonel Bray of the 4th King's Own, were patronised by the Commander-in-Chief, and by Generals Staveley and Malcolm, the Generals of Division. These games were contested with great spirit by the men, and were as successful as could have been anticipated, seeing that there was a *total* absence of ladies. Neither Tigrean nor Shoho dame graced the gathering with her presence.

The 'wapinschaw' of Prince Kassa's cavalry came off on

the afternoon of the 27th of May, as many of the officers as could attend being present to witness it. About fifty of the Prince's most dashing and skilful warriors, spiritedly headed by His Highness in person, entered the lists; and the racing and chasing that ensued could not have been more brisk or better sustained had the prize been life itself, and not merely the approbation of their sovereign and the applause of a group of foreigners.

If there is any system at all in Abyssinian warfare, it seems to be to career wildly in front of the enemy till one or more of them are induced to accept the challenge, thereafter to induce a chase, upon which a regular hurry-scurry ensues, each man hurling his spear at his enemy from a distance of forty or fifty yards, and then galloping back to his own lines with all speed. A battle between Abyssinian armies would thus consist of a series of desperate gallops, each man chasing and being chased at the same moment, throwing his spear if opportunity offered, or firing from under his elbow at his enemy if too hotly pursued. Their ponies were generally good, fleet, and sure-footed; their riding, conspicuously that of Kassa himself, was distinguished by ease and dash; and their skill in throwing the spear was remarkable. Seldom indeed did any one miss the shield at which he aimed.

It was impossible to judge of the accuracy of aim taken by those who, Scythian-like, fired behind them upon the pursuing foe; but it would appear that the retreating horseman generally handles the gun with effect, as the programme of the fight evidently ordained that each man so fired upon should consider himself dead, and quietly retreat to his corner. Kassa's thousand serviceable muskets, with ample store of ammunition, must introduce some change into the military tactics of the period; but it is difficult to say what that change will be?

And now that the expedition had come to a close,

Senafe witnessed many a warm and regretted leave-taking. The 4th and 33rd Regiments were under orders for England, they had to say goodbye to such of their number as had volunteered for another term of service in India; many officers were going to England on leave or duty, these had to receive the congratulations of their less fortunate brethren to whom too kind Nature had not given a sickly appearance, who could, therefore, indulge no hope of anything so good as leave on medical certificate, and who had no help but return to the "branding summers of Bengal," the monotony of station life in Bombay, or the short-lived gaieties of Poona, Mussoorie, or Simla. Senafe had long been looked forward to as the place of "glad meetings round the joyous hearth," where those who had shared the toil and privation of the front would meet those who had laboured and sweltered in the Passes, and rejoice together over the good fortune that had attended their joint efforts. Full of the anticipation of meeting, they had forgotten all about the parting which would follow so closely; so when the time came, it found many unprepared to bid the last *au revoir*. Not that they had failed to turn what little time they had to the best account; but what were three or four short days among so many? Every evening beheld mess-tents crowded with guests—there was not one empty corner. Long will the remembrance of those evenings live in the recollection of all whose privilege it was to see them. Who, for instance, that dined in "Annesley Hall" on the 26th of May, can ever forget an evening so fraught with pleasure of the rarest kind? Annesley Hall, so named after its popular founder, Captain Annesley of the Transport Train, was a square hut of no mean pretensions. Branches and twigs, skilfully and wonderfully intertwisted, formed substantial walls, and the same contrivance, with the addition of a tarpaulin, formed a roof warranted to

defy anything short of a deluge. Then, too, luxury of luxuries, there was a built-up fire place, with a blazing fire in the corner, the smoke from which curled itself upwards in graceful wreaths, disappearing none knew exactly how or whither. Dinner over, mirth and jollity claimed undivided attention, and their claims were not neglected. The loving cup—a gigantic horn brought all the way from Magdala—was charged again and again with the best of Guinness's stout, only to be emptied, and that quickly. Impromptu songs, suited to the occasion, related the prowess and endurance of both men and mules; the Abyssinia war-song—

"We sent them words of kindness, and they gave us slight and wrong;
"We waited, and we parleyed, our patience suffered long;
"We have shewn we can be gentle, and we've shewn we can be strong;
"In the land we are marching on,"

was sung as Confederate army never say the well-known original. Then loud and clear arose the strains of the manly song so familiar to Indian officers—

"Here's to all that fear no fall,
"And the next grey boar we see,"

a chorus which, it is needless to say, commended itself to the lusty support of every one present. Such were the *reunions* that compensated for the cheerlessness of our condition in Lasta, Dalanta, and Worohaymano; such the *reunions* with which it was meet that such an expedition should be brought to a close. They were of nightly occurrence, such of the foreign officers as were in camp being among the honoured guests. No company was considered complete without the accomplished Count Seckendorf, Aide-de-Camp to the Prince and Princess Royal of Prussia, and the stalwart, genial, manly Captain Kodolitsch, of the Austrian Army, who had long ago endeared himself to every officer in the Force.

On the morning of April 29, His Highness Prince Kassa, attended by a small escort of cavalry, rode into the British camp as the Commander-in-Chief was about to leave, and accompanied him to the head of the Pass, that he might bid his friends a 'goodbye at the door.' The troops that were present presented arms, the guns of the A-21st R.A. thundered forth a parting salute; the band struck up "We'll gang nae mair to yon town," and the column marched off, His Excellency being one of the last to cross the border.

One of the saddest things that occurred during the campaign has to be recorded in this chapter. Mr. Dufton, the Abyssinian traveller, was brutally massacred by the Shohos in the pass, when on his way from Senafe to Zoula. This gentleman had been employed in the Intelligence department, and, his services being no longer required with the Force, had obtained leave at Senafe to proceed to England. On the 28th of May he left Undal Wells, a a short distance in rear of the column, and had not proceeded more than a mile when he was set upon by Shohos, thrust through with a spear, and terribly hacked besides. Left for dead, he lingered on till the following morning, when he was found by Sir Charles Staveley's column in a perfectly sensible state, but evidently at death's door, and conveyed back to Undal, where he died in the evening. Mr. Dufton was unattended except by two ghorawallas, one of whom was first attacked and killed on the spot, his master being surrounded while preparing to defend his syce; the other was severely wounded.

Colonel Little of the 25th Bombay Native Infantry, who was in command at Undal, sent out a party in quest of the murderers, giving the native officer in charge strict injunctions to fire upon no one, unless first fired upon. The result of this order was that though the Shohos were pounced upon almost red-handed, they made good their

escape, as, being armed simply with sword and spear, they could not "fire upon" their pursuers, and so could not be fired upon. Surely something should have been left to the discretion of the officer in command of the party; if such had been done, the inanity of the order issued to him would have been counteracted.

Next day a Shoho muccadum was arrested at Undal on suspicion, he having made an attempt to escape unnoticed from the station. Enquiries were instituted, and it transpired that this man had been absent without leave at the time of the murder, that the reason he gave for his absence was an entire fabrication, that the village to which he belonged was the one nearest to the scene of the outrage, and that his brother had been accidentally shot in a chase after robbers at Senafe. With a view to take reprisals for such a wanton destruction of human life, four companies of the 25th Native Infantry were sent to scour the hills on the morning of the 1st of June, the prisoner being made to accompany them, in the hope that he might recognize some of his associates, or point out the village which harboured them.

On arriving at the scene of the murder, the villain acknowledged at least a share of the guilt by making a desperate onset on his guard, almost dashing one man's brains out with a stone, and knocking another down with a well-directed blow. But the naique in charge was the right man in the right place; he took steady aim, and shot the ruffian through the head. His body was left hanging from a tree close by, a testimony to his guilty associates that the English abhor and will punish the shedding of innocent blood.

Mr. Dufton's death was indeed a sad end to a man who had twice travelled through Abyssinia in safety,—to be hewed almost to pieces when all but quit of the country, and with his passage ticket to England in his pocket.

Warnings had been issued that the Pass was unsafe, looting having been prevalent of late; these Mr. Dufton may have forgotten, or overlooked, in his haste to reach England again. Unfortunately for himself and others, his route lay through the Shoho country; and the Shohos, like their co-religionists the Gallas, are a blood-thirsty race, which the true Abyssinians assuredly are not. Poor Dufton was best known by his book of travel in the country—the only book which was of any real practical value to the Expedition.

It seemed at Senafe that we had not yet heard the last of the irrepressible Egyptian muleteers. Long a terrible thorn in the side of the officers of the Land Transport Train, these peculiar people were reshipped to Suez as worse than useless; and everybody hoped he had heard the last of them. But an honourable member, Mr. Buckstone I think, in the House of Commons, intent upon exercising his inalienable right to brother Secretaries of State by interrogating them upon every subject under the sun, asked the Secretary of State for War whether he possessed any specific information regarding the treatment accorded to Egyptian muleteers in Abyssinia.

Mr. Buckstone's attention had been called to this subject by a letter from Zoula which appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* in the end of March last. This letter contained a long array of charges against the British authorities in Abyssinia, accusing them of conduct inconsistent with the possession of ordinary reason, justice, or humanity. These officers had behaved in a "very mean and improper manner to the "Turkish and Egyptian muleteers." They had left the poor wretches for several days without food or water; they had flogged them by dozens for not liking this regimen; they had deprived them of their clothing, and sent them back to Egypt, in some cases *in puris naturalibus*, plus a thin pair of trousers; and otherwise grossly maltreated them.

The Secretary of State asked Sir Robert Napier to cause a report to be submitted on the subject. This had now been done; and it will be very gratifying to every Englishman to learn that the charges made in the *Pall Mall Gazette* were completely refuted or answered. Lieutenant Clark, of the Madras Cavalry, a young officer whose ability had been conspicuous oftener than once during the campaign, and who held the post of paymaster to the Transport Train, wrote a full report on the subject; Lieutenant-Colonel Warden corroborated every statement made by Lieutenant Clark, and added his own wider experience in support of every opinion expressed by him. The result was that even Exeter Hall itself could not but admit that there had been 'much ado about nothing.'

The general charge that the Egyptians had been treated in a mean and improper manner was repudiated as false; as every muleteer dismissed had been fully paid up to date of embarkation, conveyed to Suez in the finest of steamers, and provided with rations for the voyage. Indeed the terms of the agreement entered into with these men had been rigidly adhered to—in many cases liberally construed in the foreigners' favour. That they were left for days without food or water, was simply one of those absurd rumours to which none but the most reckless or mischievously-inclined newsmongers would have given credence; much less have indited a letter for the sole purpose of giving them publicity. That floggings were of very frequent occurrence no one will attempt to deny; while every one must admit that the necessity for them was constant, and that their severity was by no means too great. Certainly, the British lash produced only a momentary effect upon either the back or the behaviour of the Egyptian.

The writer of the letter in question insinuated that the Egyptians were first-class muleteers, as they had represented themselves to be. Had he known anything at all about

these men and their mode of working, he must have been aware that the majority of them loaded their mules badly, neglected to feed them, and squatted lazily on the laden animals whenever the inspector happened to be out of sight. It is plain that the words "first class muleteers" were merely used to give point to the tale.

Another count of the indictment was, that the men, on being embarked for Suez, were deprived of all their clothing, and sent to Suez in rags. This is a gross and inexcusable exaggeration. There were issued to each man on his joining the Train, one cloth jacket, one pair of cloth trowsers, two serge jackets, one blanket, one great coat, one waterproof sheet, two pairs of socks, one pair of English boots, and one water cullie. As only sufficient clothing had been sent from Bombay to meet the requirements of the established strength of the Train, and as warm clothing must be provided for men going to the front, where the nights were bitterly cold, there was nothing for it but to retain that of those who might be discharged, irrespective of country or caste.

Instructions were therefore issued to take from these Egyptians—not all their clothing, but only the waterproof sheets, blankets, boots, cloth jackets, cloth trowsers, and great coats. The result showed that a "highlandman" is not the only person whom it is sometimes difficult to divest of trowsers: from the sixty-nine drivers embarked for Suez, there were recovered three waterproof sheets, eleven blankets, four pairs of boots, seven cloth jackets, two pairs of cloth trowsers, and three great coats; in all, thirty articles instead of four hundred and fourteen! The Egyptians had, perhaps, thrown away their "old rags," as the *Pall Mall Gazette* said; but they had somehow preserved an immense quantity of good serviceable clothing. That any man had to be allowed to retain his trowsers to hide his nakedness is utterly false.

That several batches were conveyed on board by a military guard is true; but this step was not taken till the necessity for it had been most unmistakeably manifested. The sensationalist forgets to mention that a party of these ruffians had, without the slightest provocation, attacked the crew of the bunder boat told of to convey them on board, broken open the tindal's chest, stolen his money, and finally, from sheer devilry, cut and disabled the boat. No better proof could be adduced of the uniformly just and humane treatment experienced by these drivers than the readiness they evinced to re-engage. A vessel that took away a batch of discharged men to Suez, brought back many of the same men in charge of mules, on the return voyage! The letter to which Mr. Buckstone calls the attention of the House cannot be designated otherwise than as having been a gross and wilful perversion of the truth.

The weather at Koomaylee was fearfully hot, and several deaths from heat apoplexy had occurred in Annesley Bay. So prevalent had they been on board the *Golden Fleece*, hospital-ship, that the Commodore had recently sent her out to sea for a day or two.

CHAPTER XXX.

ON BOARD THE S.S. "PERUVIAN," *June 22nd.*

When, in messroom and barracks, the officers and men of the Abyssinia Field Force live the six months in Abyssinia over again, rejoice in each others' joys, and laugh once more at their common hardships, the last week at Zoula will certainly never be forgotten in the recital. The nights there were hot and enervating; the days were infinitely worse; blazing sun and scorching wind com-

bined to render existence on shore miserable beyond conception, while clouds of drifting sand as completely obscured the camp during the greater part of the day as if visibility and the power of vision were no part of one's birthright.

To escape from all this as speedily as possible was very wisely every one's aim; those few who could find accommodation afloat eagerly availed themselves of it; and the many who were compelled to remain ashore worked night and day to hasten the date of their departure. This haste was chiefly noticeable among those who had just returned from the front; such as knew nothing of Abyssinia except what six months at Zoula or Koomaylee had taught them, were in a wonderful degree *patientes pulveris atque solis*—some indeed were so far 'gone' as to avow that they had become accustomed to, and rather liked their salamandrine existence.

The great majority, however, could ill brook even a day's delay in such an atmosphere. They called to mind the life-giving breezes of Senafe, Addigerat, and Antalo, the magnificent scenery of Focada, Dongolo, and Ashangi, the verdure of Enderta, Wojerat, and Lasta; and this retrospect did not invest the dreary waste around Zoula with new attractions.

When, therefore, the *Peruvian* left Annesley Bay on the 8th of June, the embarkation of the remaining troops, animals, and stores was being prosecuted with extraordinary vigour. Major Roberts and his assistants in the Quartermaster General's department were incessantly at work getting transports ready for sea; Major Mignon and his department knew no rest for despatching on board food for man and beast; the blue peter floated from many a mast head; and 'departures' were constantly taking place.

For all this, there was no perceptible abatement in the clamour of those weary to be off—little cared they how or '

whither, if only the helmsman's face was turned away from Abyssinia. But the end was not far off: His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, who had waited patiently till he saw the work virtually over, was now about to leave for England; the favourite transport *Norna* was to sail for Bombay, with such of the Staff as remained, on the following day; the 3rd N. I. were then being embarked, and the 25th were to follow in a few days' time.

The re-embarkation of the Force was conducted with a promptitude and success which reflect the greatest credit upon the Bombay Army; but it must not be forgotten how much is due to Major Roberts, a distinguished Bengal officer, who was almost from first to last in charge of the Quartermaster General's department at Zoula, and whose energy and ability had to endure many a heavy strain. The hardness of the fate which compelled Major Roberts to remain at Zoula without change or rest was often commented on in front; at the same time the necessity for retaining there an officer on whom full reliance could be placed was universally admitted.

It was a hard fate, too, which pounced upon Major Mignon for all the drudgery and toil at the end of the campaign, as he had had them at its commencement. But what else could be done? Colonel Lucas had unfortunately been compelled to leave for England sick; Captain Hawkes, as energetic an officer as ever lived, had broken down from excess of work; the Controller of Transport and Supply accompanied, of course, by his assistant, was already well on his way to Bombay, having submitted his last vexatious memo. to Colonel Warden, and his last report to the Commander-in-Chief,—a report which His Excellency 'could not accept.' Of the senior Commissariat officers none remained except that one who had borne the burden and heat of the day throughout—"all all were gone, the old familiar faces."

The Commissariat department was sadly under-officered from the first; at least thirty more deputy assistants, and double the number of inspectors, conductors, weighing men, &c., ought to have been provided by the Bombay Government. Important depôts had to be entrusted to men who had probably never seen a 'dubber' of ghee or a bag of rice in their lives before; and notwithstanding the size of the Force, there was only one officer of the department who reached the front with it. Indeed all the work with the Advance Force, and the care of all the depôts near Magdala, devolved upon two officers, Major Mignon and Lieutenant Shewell, and upon two Parsee inspectors, brothers. These two last, whose merits cannot have escaped the notice of their superiors, did really splendid and intelligent service throughout.

Eager though officers and men were to return to India or England, as the case might be, not a few shipmasters seemed anxious to remain where they were. Steamers were ready to tow the sailing transports to Aden, but many of the sailing transports were persistently reported not ready for sea, the most frivolous excuses being trumped up to account for their delay. True, their crews were suffering from sickness induced solely by the heat and other features of Annesley Bay; but then the expedition was over; the date of their discharge was drawing nigh; and "the more days, the more dollars" was accordingly adopted as their motto. Once in tow, there was no possibility of dawdling till Aden was reached; but a few days could easily be wasted there; and many vessels put in for a spar, a few gallons of water, a ton of coal, or something which, under different circumstances, might have been very well done without. From Aden, too, there was a grand opportunity for economising the sixteen hundred miles that intervened between them and Bombay. Wind and tide both contributed to hurry them on too rapidly;

but the elements could be counteracted in great measure by spreading merely their jib and single reefed topsails. More than one ship was dishonest enough to resort to this barefaced manner of robbing Government of a few days' pay.

The death of Dr. J. G. Nicolson at the end of the campaign cast a gloom over Zoula. He was proceeding to England on sick certificate, as he suffered from abscess on the liver. The steamer *Indore* in which he embarked, got ashore on a reef in the Red Sea, where she remained five days, during which time Dr. Nicolson died. The *Indore* also carried Colonel Milward with Sir R. Napier's despatches to the Secretary of State for India and the Horse Guards regarding the capture of Magdala.

Latest political news from the country around Magdala showed that Lasta was unsettled in the highest degree. It will be remembered that Ali Faris, the popular chief of Lasta, was released from chains at Magdala; he soon defeated and took prisoner Dejaz Mechecha, to whom Wakshum Gobazye had given the province, and proclaimed himself ruler once more. Neither the services of Gobazye, nor the character of Mechecha were such as would have inclined Sir R. Napier to aid them; so a proclamation to the effect that we regarded Gobazye as paramount ruler in those districts, and that our friends owed him allegiance, was considered sufficient. Gobazye had now written a boastful letter to say that the business he had in hand around Debra Tabor, and which prevented his seeing Sir Robert, had been accomplished, and that he will soon dispose of Ali Faris, and set free his lieutenant. What particular "business" Wakshum had in hand at Debra Tabor, nobody could say for certain. Some conjectured that he was excessively indignant at the honourable manner in which his rival in the North (Prince Kassa) had been treated, and therefore

absented himself; others inclined to the belief that he kept out of the way, fearing, as all Abyssinians did, that Sir Robert would at the last moment make terms with Theodore rather than fight him. The general belief was that Gobazye had heard of Sir Robert's having expressed a hope that he would be able to make terms between Kassa and himself, persuading each to hold with his own, and that he kept aloof lest the subject should be broached to him. Probably, therefore, we shall soon hear of an invasion of Tigre from the South, unless the fame of Kassa's guns lead the Wakshum to despair of the success of any such project. Every one left Tigre delighted to know that the young Prince, who exercised *the first power* of which he found himself possessed to aid the English, should have been left by Sir Robert in a position to disarm the hostile intentions of his enemies and to hold his own against all comers.

The *Peruvian* left Zoula on the 8th of June having in tow the *Clytie* and *Dreadnought*. Aden was reached on the evening of the 11th, and the voyage continued to Bombay on the 12th idem. With the exception of two days off Socotra, the weather was all that could have been desired, no rain having fallen till Kennery was sighted, nor monsoon swell interfered with the comfort and equanimity of amateur sailors.

The voyage was as pleasant as the most agreeable company and a steady sea-going boat could make it; and if circumstances over which Lieutenant Watts, the able and popular naval officer on board, Captain Salmon and his officers had no control, caused it to extend over ten days, the officers who were on board will often delight to recall the ten days they spent in the steam transport *Peruvian*. The passengers were Brigadier General Petrie, R.A., Colonel Macleod, Assistant Adjutant General, Major Maude, Deputy Judge Advocate General, Dr. Currie,

Inspector General of Hospitals, Staff Veterinary Surgeon Hallen, Captain Hand, Dr. Martin, Lieut. Gaselee, and Meer Akbar Alee. There were also on board details of various batteries of artillery, the Judge Advocate General's establishment, public followers, and horses.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of such vast importance was the Land Transport Train throughout the whole of the campaign, so many and embarrassing were its defects at the commencement, and so widely different are the opinions entertained regarding the cause of its failure, that it is necessary to give a brief account of its organization, and a short *resume* of the official correspondence relating thereto.

In accordance with instructions received from the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India, the Bombay Government set about the collection of baggage animals, early in August 1867. On the 15th of that month, Colonel Phayre, the Quartermaster General of the Bombay Army, informed the Government that H. E. Sir Robert Napier had nominated Major R. Warden to act as Director of Land Transport, subject to the approval of the Right Hon'ble the Governor in Council. This nomination was confirmed by Government on the 20th of September. In the meantime, however, orders were issued to Major Warden—

1*st.*—That he and the officers who might be placed under his command, should receive charge of, and tend such animals as might be made over to them by the Commissary General.

2*nd.*—That the animals should be fed by the Commissariat department, on receipt of requisitions signed by the Director or his officers.

3*rd*.—That all purchases should be made under the arrangements and orders of the Commissary General, either by Commissariat officers, or by the officers of the Land Transport, as the Commissary General might find most convenient.

Four officers were also requested, two to accompany Major F. P. Mignon to the Red Sea, and two to be in readiness to send to the Persian Gulf, in connection with requisitions made on the Political Agent in Turkish Arabia.

Major Warden received instructions from Colonel Dunsterville, Commissary General of the Army, on August 15, to commence the work of organizing the Transport Corps, under orders from the Quartermaster General of the Army. It was distinctly laid down by Colonel Dunsterville, that officers of the Transport Train were not to be disbursing officers; in other words, that all expenditure in connection with the corps must be sanctioned by the Commissary General or Government through him, before it could be incurred. While, theoretically, this need not have fettered the action of the Director, practically it was found to do so in a most unpleasant manner. Delays were unavoidable; journeys from Poona to Bombay, and from Bombay to Poona back again, were constantly rendered necessary; and references and explanations were interminable. Much precious time was thus wasted, and no small amount of misunderstanding engendered. Major Warden very frequently found his hands completely tied by red tape, and his indents *virtually* unattended to, because subjected to all the prejudiced criticism and circumlocutory tendencies of those through whose hands they had to go. This became so notorious at last, that Major Warden was allowed to be what he ought to have been from the first, his own disbursing officer. Colonel Dunsterville also laid it down, in his letter of August 15, that while the Transport Corps was

to be distinct from the Commissariat department in the Field, it was to be by no means independent of his control, i. e. of the control of Colonel H. W. Holland, Controller of Transport and Supply, his representative. "You must," he says, "understand that the Land Transport "Corps is to be quite distinct from the Commissariat "department in the Field—this, however, does not render "it independent of my control in all matters appertaining "to the efficiency of the carriage that may be procured "from any source, and placed under your orders for "employment in the Transport Corps." Herein, as the working of the Train in Abyssinia showed, lay one of the causes of inefficiency in the department. Had Major Warden, *from the first*, been in a position to allow no interference whatever from the Commissariat, with the organization and working of his Train, it had been better for all concerned. Colonel Dunsterville adds:—"The "Transport Corps although distinct from the Commissariat "department in the Field, its duties are intimately "connected with that department; I have therefore to "request that a cordial co-operation between these depart-"ments may always be maintained." The object sought to be obtained by this piece of advice cannot but be admired, whatever may be thought of the grammar in which it is couched. A blunder or two in syntax may readily be excused, especially in connection with so important a matter as the transport of an army of 30,000 souls; but it is by no means clear that the Commissariat, as represented by Lieut.-Colonel Holland, showed itself desirous of cultivating such good understanding. The contrary was very frequently the case; and it is unfair to have made Major Warden, as was here done, the party responsible for the maintenance of cordiality which was impossible under existing circumstances.

On the 22nd of August, Colonel Phayre submitted to the

Government of Bombay, Major Warden's proposals for the organization of the corps. As a sort of preamble to the scheme, the Quarter Master General makes the following remarks, which it may be well to quote :—

"It will be in the recollection of Government that "about eleven years ago, a similar corps was raised for "foreign service in Persia, and that on the return of the "expedition in 1857, its field organization was broken up, "as too expensive for home service, and the cattle were "distributed at certain stations of this presidency where "field columns are ordered to be held in readiness for "immediate service.

"I am careful to note this distinction between home "arrangements in peace and those for foreign service in "an enemy's country, because in the latter case, combina-"tion of transport under one head, and its administration "under one uniform system, are indispensable.

"It is requisite, therefore, to bear in mind that all the "proposals which may now or hereafter be made with "regard to the Land Transport Corps for Abyssinia have "sole reference to its existence as part of the army destined "to carry out military operations in that country. Thus, "any arrangements for purchasing and collecting cattle "or equipments that may now be resorted to as a matter "of economy, and indeed, of necessity, in India, will not "be held as binding in Abyssinia, where the officers, men, "and cattle of the proposed corps will be under the same "rules of discipline and organization as apply to our "artillery and other mounted corps.

"Each brigade of the Force will have its transport "attached of the kind and quantity suited to its wants; "and each section of the Commissariat department in "Abyssinia will be similarly provided for, as circum-"stances at the time being may require; but the relation "of the Land Transport Corps to regiments and depart-

"ments will be similar to that of every other department "of supply belonging to the Force, the employment of its "resources being subject to the orders of the officer "in chief command, conveyed though his Quartermaster "General."

Colonel Warden, also, in submitting his proposals to the Quartermaster General, prefaced them with the following memoranda :—

"I have, as suggested by you, taken up the organiza- "tion of the Persian Transport Corps to help me in this "work. I would, however, at the outset, remind you that "the stability of this organization or its efficiency was "never sufficiently tested, in consequence of the Persian "War coming so speedily to an end. But I have not "adhered to it much, as it is altogether so different (and, "if I may be allowed to say so, inferior) to the corps "raised for the Crimean War, in which I held the com- "mand of a division, that in most cases I have made the "latter my guide, avoiding those errors in it which after- "experience brought to light.

"I have taken as a basis the construction of one divi- "sion, allotting to it a minimum strength of 2,140 mules ; "of course if camels or elephants constituted the division "the number of individuals would be reduced in ratio. "You will observe that I have ignored all such persons as "'muccadums,' and given the supervision of squads to "native soldiers and non-commissioned officers, either "from the cavalry or infantry branch of the army, and I "will explain why. Dearly-bought experience in the "Crimea taught us how little we could depend on this "class when it came to actual service, for if punished for "neglect or offended in the slightest degree they not only "absconded, but carried off the men under them, reveng- "ing themselves by sowing the seeds of mistrust and "discontent among all the muleteers, and if detached

"with a convoy of mules on any duty (no matter how few "in number) it was necessary to send a soldier in charge. "I would here notice that from 10 to 15 men, with a non- "commissioned officer, were detached from each regiment "in a division, and placed under the orders of the captain of "a division of the Land Transport in charge of squads, and "right well they worked; they answered admirably; "proud of being selected from the regiment for this work, "they seemed to vie one with the other as to whose animals "should be in the best order; and this is the reason why "I would now so strongly urge the employment of native "soldiers for the charge of squads instead of muccadums. "You will observe that in my distribution I have placed "native officers in charge of 'troops.'

"I attached so much importance to having sepoys, non- "commissioned officers, and native officers in charge of "'squads,' 'sections,' and 'troops' respectively, that I "have taken them up first, for the whole effectual working "of the corps depends on the state of efficiency in which "each squad of mules and their equipments are kept up. "Before leaving this subject, I would add that I propose "filling up the vacancies in non-comissioned officers of "sections by promoting the best men in charge of squads, "and filling up vacancies in the latter by calling for "volunteers from the native branches of the army.

"I now pass on to the officers; no one will deny that "their work will be most arduous, and to be performed "efficiently will require bodily health, energy, and ability "of no common order; even subalterns will have great "individual responsibility, for their charge consists of 1,000 "mules with their equipments and 1,200 men of all ranks "and classes. Moreover, they are likely to be frequently "detached with their brigades as convoys. The captain "of a division will have, of course, the command of two "brigades, and to the usual responsibility of such a charge

"the pay of all classes under his command will devolve,
"and he in his turn will be responsible for the correctness
"of his accounts to the paymaster of the corps, of whom
"I have treated separately. The second in command
"should, I think, be a field officer, and, in the absence of
"the Commandant (or Director General) on duty to
"any distant point, the whole responsibility will devolve on
"him. At other times he would be required to visit the
"different divisions and see personally that everything
"was in good working order. A staff officer of ability,
"method, and knowledge of duty in all its details is
"necessary, for whatever efforts may be made to reduce
"correspondence and paper work to the smallest propor-
"tion possible, (and certainly if this rests with me it shall
"be the case,) yet registers of men, animals, equipments,
"and stores must be kept. The next officer is a paymaster
"to the corps. I propose that the captain of division
"should be his own paymaster, and he submits his
"accounts to the paymaster of the corps who must, at
"starting, have a good establishment; so that after the
"campaign little or no difficulty should be found in
"closing the accounts of the corps, if necessary;
"for it is well known that the real difficulty of this
"department only commences with its adjustments, and I
"purpose in consultation with Colonel Bar and Major
"Chitty to give the subject my most serious consideration,
"and to devise a concise and clear method of keeping the
"accounts. No complication should be allowed in the
"accounts required from the captain of a division; it
"should be a simple matter of debit and credit; the
"voucher in its simplest form, and some degree of trust
"placed in this officer.

"As regards the pay and position of officers. The officers
"of the Land Transport Corps in the Crimea,—I speak of
"myself and other captains of divisions,—held the same

"position as the Assistant Quartermaster-General of the "division of the army, and were paid accordingly. Colonel "W. Napier was the second in command, and Colonel "McMurdo the Director-General, whose position was the "same as Deputy Adjutant-General or Deputy Quarter-"master General of the Army; and I would respectfully "suggest that this corps be placed on the same footing.

"In closing this section, I ask permission most re-"spectfully to point out how careful should be the selection "of officers, European and native; for the work of a "Land Transport Corps to be done at all must be done "well. There must be no delays, no shortcomings, for "in a country like Abyssinia there will be no remedy or "help to fall back upon; if it fails, it fails; on the effici-"ency and success of the transport, the very existence of "the army depends."

In order to enable a comparison being drawn between the scale now proposed and what was sanctioned for Persia, Colonel Phayre had two separate statements drawn up, giving the requisite information. There was a difference of expense amounting to Rs. 123 per 100 mules, per mensem, in favor of the Abyssinian prospectus. According to the proposed scale, the permanent charges in the latter were to be as follows:—

	Rs.
Head-quarter staff of the corps, Director's pay, and office establishment, per mensem	2,520
Pay of his Staff Officer or Adjutant	600
Pay and Office Establishment of the second in command	1,388
Pay of a Veterinary Surgeon.....	400

Monthly Cost of each Division of Mules.

Establishment of Division.	
1 Field Officer or Captain Commanding.	Each Division, including European and Native commissioned, non-commissioned, rank and file, syces, veterinary, and artificers' establishments, Rs. 20,210-0-0.
2 Lieutenants.	
4 Subedars.	
4 Jemedars.	
16 Havildars.	
16 Naiques.	
100 Privates.	
1,040 Syces.	
1 Serjeant-major.	
1 Quartermaster Serjeant.	
Artificers' Establishment.	
Veterinary „	
Office „	

A Division was to be composed of squads each consisting of 1 private, 12 syces, and 25 mules; sections, consisting of 1 naique, 5 privates, 65 syces, and 125 mules each; troops, each consisting of 2 native officers, 4 havildars, 4 naiques, 20 privates, 260 syces, 500 mules.

A brigade of the corps was to be two troops, 1,000 mules, and each brigade to be commanded by a subaltern. Two brigades were to compose a division, the division being commanded by a captain or field officer, as the case might be.

It was also proposed at once to organize the head-quarters of the corps and a mule division to the following extent, for which the sanction of His Excellency the Right Honorable the Governor in Council was urgently solicited.

1 Commandant or Director General.	2 Subalterns of Divisions.
1 Staff Officer.	4 Subedars.
1 Second in Command.	4 Jemedars.
1 Commandant of Division (Field Officer or Captain, as the case may be).	16 Havildars.
	16 Naiques.
	100 Privates.
	1,040 Syces.

The native commissioned, non-commissioned, rank and file were to be drawn by volunteering from the native regiments of infantry in the presidency, and His Excellency

proposed to arm them with a short sword, or a shield and spear, as might be decided on hereafter. Syces were entertained to the extent of 1,040, according as drafts of mules and ponies were received or known to have been purchased in India, or by the officers who have just left for the Persian Gulf, or by those who were despatched to the Red Sea and East African coast.

On the 31st of August, (nine days after the submission of Colonel Warden's scheme,) H. E. Sir Seymour Fitzgerald minuted upon it. "The first and chief question is," said His Excellency, "whether it is desirable to esta-"blish the corps on an independent basis, or subordinate "to the Quartermaster General's Department, or to leave "the Transport department as it has hitherto been, under "the control and direction of the Commissariat." Thereafter, he proceeds to quote a long list of authorities (Lord Strathnairn's Committee of ten years ago) on the questions of transport and supply, and says :—

"I have no difficulty, therefore, in adhering to an "opinion which recommends itself to my own mind, and is "supported by such a weight of authority." That opinion was, that the Transport service should not be separated from the Commissariat, as proposed by Major Warden and Colonel Phayre, and approved of by Sir Robert Napier.

Nor was this the only point on which Sir Seymour differed from the Commander-in-Chief. Further on in the same minute he says :—

"A further question, however, arises as to the organiza-"tion of the Land Transport Service, assuming that it is "left, as I think it must, under the direction and control "of the Commissariat. What the amount and character "of organization ought to be is a most difficult question, "but I must confess that it appears to me that the scheme "proposed by Major Warden is more elaborate and more "complicated than is required, or indeed than is advisable.

"I believe that just such an organization under special "officers as shall suffice to secure that, for whatever service "the Commissariat may require them, there shall always "be forthcoming a sufficient strength of healthy animals, "well cared for and well equipped, with proper attendants "to drive them, feed them, take care of them and their "equipments, with packers, &c., to load them, is what we "want, and any more complete and elaborate organization "will tend only to establish it as an independent service, "which is exactly what I desire to avoid, and to remove it "from the direction and control of the Commissariat.

"I think it would be sufficient, therefore, to put the "Transport Service, under one officer, who should be the "Director-General (in the present instance Major Warden), "who would be assisted by a sufficient staff in the propor- "tion of not less than one staff officer to every 2,000 mules, "or equivalent of 2,000 mules, besides a small establish- "ment for returns, correspondence, &c. The establish- "ment of divisions appears to me unnecessary, and likely "to produce difficulties and confusion where fractions of "divisions may have to be employed. The whole force "should be divided into troops of 100 mules (or their "equivalent of camels or other animals as employed) under "the command of a native officer, and a superior native "officer should have the inspection of every five troops or "500 mules. Under this system the head of the Com- "missariat will indicate what transport he requires for any "service, and the Director-General will see that the neces- "sary transport under its proper officers is provided; but, "when provided, the direction and command of it will "rest with the assistant commissariat officer appointed "for the particular service by the Commissary General, "and who will be responsible to him for the custody, "delivery, storage, or distribution of the stores or supplies "entrusted to him."

The proposal to employ privates of the native Indian Army, in place of muccadums, was also disallowed by Sir Seymour, on the ground that it was "not desirable "to hazard a change at the very moment of commencing "a campaign, and thus risking the efficiency of our land "transport, on which our whole success may depend."

As to the propriety or necessity of enlisting the men employed in the Land Transport Corps, His Excellency quotes the opinion of Sir William Mansfield, who holds, that in case of an Anglo-Indian Force being sent for operations on land out of India, "a military transport train "organized for the special purpose, and composed of "enlisted men, under regimental officers," should be organized, such an organization being "a *sine quâ non* of a foreign expedition." Sir Seymour was aware that an opinion was entertained by experienced officers that the men would be found unwilling to enlist, and that the proposal was therefore impracticable. He admitted however, that the promise of an adequate and liberal pension, in case of death, or being incapacitated while on service, would be found a sufficient inducement for the men to enlist temporarily for the expedition, beyond which period their services would not be required. But he regarded the question as of secondary importance.

On the 2nd of September the Hon'ble Mr. Ellis also embodied his knowledge and views on the subject. His mind was so completely made up on the matter, that he could never "see the connection between the Commissa-"riat and Transport departments severed, in order to "place the latter under the Quartermaster General." With incredible presumption and bad taste, the honourable gentleman pits his own opinion directly against that of Sir Robert Napier. He says :—"I do not know how far "His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief concurs in "Colonel Phayre's views, but it would require very strong

"arguments in addition to the weight attaching to His "Excellency's opinion to induce me to abandon my con- "viction on this point." And still further, with regard to the organization to be adopted, he will have none of the "military organization" upon which Sir Robert had set his heart. "An "organization such as is approved by the Right Honorable "the Governor would probably best secure effective discipline "without complicating the service too much. An over- "refined organization is quite as likely to produce confu- "sion (and it will certainly cause more delay) as the want "of proper discipline."

The Hon'ble Mr. Mansfield found, doubtless for the first time, from the minute of His Excellency the Governor, that "the highest authorities in England and India" had "agreed "that it is undesirable to remove the control of the Transport "service of an army from the Commissariat"; and, more- over, he thought the revival of the discussion at that time particularly inopportune; in other words, he thought Sir Robert Napier very much to blame for having a mind of his own upon the subject. Mr. Mansfield further supported the Right Honourable the Governor, and was of opinion that "a transport service, as roughly sketched" by him, "would be the best adapted for the requirements of the "Force."

Sir Robert Napier, treating the *ex cathedra* opinions of his very experienced colleagues with more respect than some officers would have extended to them, wrote as follows:—

"I do not think the time is appropriate for any dis- "cussion as to the department under which the Land "Transport should be placed, and I accept without hesita- "tion His Excellency's decision to place it under the "Commissariat.

"I believe that the success of systems depends more on "the men who work them, than on the systems themselves.

" But I cannot accept, without protest, a decision to throw " such a body of men as the drivers of our transport animals " will be, if we get them, on an expedition in a foreign " country, without a very complete organization to secure " order and discipline.*

" There may be Egyptians, Arabs, Persians, and " Hindustanis, and Abyssinians mixed up together, and " without more organization than the ordinary one in the " Commissariat department, nothing but confusion would " ensue, the people of the country would be plundered " and ill-treated, and all our efforts at conciliation defeated.

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* The above reference in the text of Sir Robert Napier's own subdued protest affords suitable occasion for mentioning an important point carefully excluded, or unaccountably forgotten, by the clique behind the Bombay Government, who were so determined to retain the Transport Train under the Commissariat, or rather under an influential officer for whom a well-paid post had to be secured. When H. E. Sir Robert Napier spoke of "the ordinary" organization in the Commissariat, which he characterises as one "peculiar to itself which *has existed* from time immemorial," &c. he overlooked (for the moment) the all-important fact that *after* the Persian War the Bombay Commissariat transport organization had knocked out of it one of its special " peculiarities," and which, had it still existed in 1867, would have given to the special pleading of the Bombay Government that real foundation of which their contention was destitute.

In the Appendix III. of Jameson's Code p. 221, or para. 230, may be found G. G. O. No. 314 of 1857, which, by taking away the control of Cantonment bazaars from the Commissariat, deprived the officers of that department of all power of managing large bodies of subordinates in camp. This G. G. O. robbed Commissariat officers of prestige and the habit of prompt command, and destroyed that substitute for military discipline which had enabled the Commissariat to govern its own transport in the field for half a century with unequalled success. It will thus be seen that the Bombay Government was arguing from a state of things which ten years before had been swept away in deference to purblind economists and ruthless amalgamationists. Had Sir Robert remembered this missing link—which, in the worry inflicted on him he might easily forget—he would have had a light thrown on the (old) organization " which goes (went) on somehow one hardly knows how," while he could have silenced the Bombay Government in a line, by pointing out that, for an extraordinary transport exigency, the Commissariat they were contending for had become emasculated by having had drawn from it that fibre of military discipline which was the one thing needful for the purpose of the Expedition.

"The Commissariat department have but a small quantity "of their own carriage to manage; the greater portion "has been hired carriage, managed under a kind of "organization peculiar to itself, which has existed from "time immemorial, and which goes on somehow, one "hardly knows how; but this is very different from the "large body of drivers who must now be engaged, and "for whom a regular system of control must be instituted.

"I understand the scale of establishment proposed by "Major Warden and the Quartermaster General resembles "generally that which was formerly instituted in the Presi- "dency for the Persian expedition. Admitting that the "numbers are very great, I shall be prepared to try any "reasonable reduction which may be proposed by a com- "mittee composed of Lieut.-Colonel Holland, Major "Warden, and any other officer appointed by Government "to consider the question."

The idea of appointing a committee to consider a question upon which His Excellency the Governor had given a definite opinion! It was preposterous. Says Sir Seymour, in a tart little minute, written immediately after reading Sir Robert's remarks—"There are two things "to which I feel a great objection: 1st, that the Force "should be organized in a shape that shall make it an "independent corps, instead of being a corps subordinate "to the Commissariat; and, 2nd, to devolve on a com- "mittee the decision of a point which we can very well "settle without the intervention of any such body."

On September 12, a Draft Resolution was made by Colonel Marriott, setting forth the will of the Bombay Government regarding the transport with which Sir Robert should convey his Force from Zoula to Magdala. That resolution need not be quoted, as it merely consisted of the salient points of the various minutes recorded by His Excellency the Governor, and Messrs. Ellis and Mansfield.

With this Sir Robert Napier was very naturally dissatisfied. On the 11th of October, the following letter was addressed by his orders to the Military Secretary to Government :—

"Sir,—With reference to Government Resolution, "Military Department, dated 28th September, No. 144A "and accompaniment, His Excellency the Commander-in- "Chief, after due consideration of Colonel Dunsterville's "proposals for proceeding in the formation of the Land "Transport Establishment, and after a careful inspection "of the portion of the Establishment already embarked, "begs to recommend the following Establishment for a "Division of 2000 Mules.

"Instead of that previously proposed of, viz. :—

4	Head Inspectors	at Rs.	120	each.
8	2nd ,, ...	,, ,,	80	,,
16	Head Muccadums.....	,, ,,	15	,,

"His Excellency recommends—

4	Head Inspectors	,, ,,	120	,,
4	2nd ,, ...	,, ,,	80	,,
10	3rd ,, ...	,, ,,	40	,,
20	Head Muccadums.....	,, ,,	20	,,

"The Commander-in-Chief has stated his reasons for "these proposals in his demi-official letters to His Excel- "lency the Governor of the 5th and 7th of October; and "His Excellency desires me to say that he considers that "the addition of these grades under any denomination "that His Excellency the Governor may prefer, is indis- "pensable to the efficiency of the Land Transport.

"The Commander-in-Chief begs to refer to the third "Article of the decision of Lord Strathnairn's Commis- "sion, in which it says 'the whole of the Army Trans- "port organized by the Government should be of a "military character under military subordination, but all

"the officers should have military command limited to "their own corps, and should not be employed on any "duty unconnected with Transport.'

"The Muccadum—regarding whom His Excellency the "Governor relies on Colonel Dunsterville's long experi- "ence, is a valuable person when he is procurable—is the "result of the Indian patriarchal constitution of carriers "of all descriptions; and by virtue of his connections or "the possession of a large share in the ownership of the "animals he employs, he obtains sufficient influence to "ensure the fidelity and obedience of his working fellows, "and often has means of giving compensation if they fail.

"But such a class of Muccadums who could be relied "upon to see to the care of the animals when detached, is "not to be found amongst the new establishment. The "Drivers and the head Muccadums are collected from "different quarters and are disconnected with each other. "The guarantee for good service which is to be found "with the soldier from his hopes of pension and his "regimental character, are wanting; as is also the "principle of strict obedience to orders.

"The establishment which has been engaged will no "doubt prove very valuable when instructed in their work "and under proper superintendence, but without the "addition, which is recommended, the greatest confusion "and misfortune may be anticipated.

"An officer who served in Bhotan writes as follows:—

"'At the last moment—the moment when it was most "necessary to strike a blow—we could not have moved, "because our Carriage Transport broke down; the attend- "ance with them was insufficient.'

"On receiving the sanction of His Excellency the "Governor in Council, His Excellency the Commander- "in-Chief will at once cause the necessary military "subordinates to be drawn from the ranks of the British

"and Native Army, taking them as much as possible from "the Cavalry branch to secure a knowledge of the care "and equipment of the Transport animals, in which they "will be able to instruct the untrained subordinates who "must necessarily form part of the Establishment raised "under such an emergency."

This was sanctioned, and the constitution of the corps, as at last determined on, was the following, for every 2,000 mules :—

1	Captain, with full regimental pay, and	Rs.	500	staff pay.
2	Subalterns do. ...	,,	300	do.
4	Head Inspectors (enlisted men)	,,	120	each.
4	Second ,, ,, ...	,,	80	,,
10	Third ,, ,, ...	,,	40	,,
20	Fourth ,, ,, ...	,,	20	,,
80	Muccadums	,,	12	,,
1	Driver to 2 mules.....	,,	10	,,
2	Weighing men.....	,,	30	,,
4	Weighing coolies.....	,,	10	,,
1	Head smith	,,	45	,,
8	Smiths	,,	22	,,
1	Head carpenter.....	,,	45	,,
6	Carpenters.....	,,	22	,,
1	Head saddler.....	,,	25	,,
10	Saddlers	,,	22	,,
8	Bellows boys..... ...	,,	9	,,
8	Hammermen.....	,,	13	,,
1	Head ropemaker	,,	45	,,
6	Do.	,,	22	,,
4	Chief farriers	,,	40	,,
20	Farriers.....	,,	30	,,

In addition to these, a number of muleteers were sent from Aden, Persia, Suez, &c. and also a number of interpreters.

When the campaign had been brought to a glorious termination in spite of all difficulties, it occurred to the Bombay Government that it had better look to its laurels. On the very day, therefore, that Sir Robert Napier started on his weary homeward march, and when he was toiling across 'the formidable chasm of the Beshilo,' his colleagues in Bombay were penning an able minute, with the intent to show that they had no part or lot in ruining the Transport Corps. The Bombay Government having observed that the organization of that Corps was likely to be made the subject of discussion in England, and believing that misapprehension existed as to the course pursued by them with reference to its establishment, caused the papers relating thereto to be reprinted and forwarded to the Secretary of State for India. Most of these have already appeared in the blue-books relating to the campaign; but the following justificatory minute by His Excellency the Governor dated Mahableshwur 18th April 1868, is new, and will be read with great interest. It may be regarded as embodying the case for the defendants :—

"When the scheme of Major Warden for the establishment of the transport train was submitted to Government, there were two points on which, in common with my colleagues, I expressed a difference of opinion from the Commander-in-Chief.

1st.—With regard to the propriety of putting the transport of the army under the Quartermaster General instead of under the Commissariat. With reference to this I expressed a strong opinion in which Mr. Ellis and Mr. Mansfield concurred, that the department of supply should have the control of the transport, and gave the reasons which induced me to form that opinion. I have had no reason since to doubt the soundness of that view, and Sir Robert Napier said he unhesitatingly withdrew that proposal which he added, he should never have allowed to be made had he been aware that the Government of Lord Elphinstone had already expressed an adverse opinion on the subject.

"The second point on which I differed from Sir Robert Napier was with reference to the transport train being put under a military organization.

"I expressed the opinion which was shared by the other members of the Government, that it was not wise to attempt a novel organization to which the class in the presidency whom we wished to employ were unaccustomed at the commencement of a campaign when there would be no time or opportunity of maturing the details such an organization required, and secondly, I expressed a fear that the belief entertained by many officers well acquainted with the class referred to, viz., that we should not find them willing to take such a semi-military service would be found to be well-grounded.

"I was of opinion that the muleteers from Egypt, Persia, and elsewhere whom we probably should have to employ, and who, at any rate, would come in charge of the mules, would easily fall into their places in a corps which was already in existence, and to a certain extent organized, whereas if from the repugnance of the natives of this presidency to take service in a corps that was organized on a military footing, a transport train was not formed here in the first instance, nothing but confusion could arise where officers from India without men, and men from Egypt and elsewhere without officers, met for the first time on the shore at Zoulla.

"Sir Robert Napier, on the other hand, was of opinion that with men from many different countries of wild undisciplined habits and prone to violence it was necessary to have a complete military organization. It was obvious that apart from the high authority of Sir Robert Napier there was much to be urged in support of such a view.

"In the public discussions on this subject it has been assumed, that because I expressed an opinion adverse to the adoption of a military organization that opinion was adhered to. The exact reverse is the fact. In deference to the opinion of Sir Robert Napier the Government waived its own opinion, and an organization was proposed by the Commissary General entirely differing from that I had originally sketched out, and subsequently upon a renewed expression on the part of Sir Robert Napier of his opinion that the organization proposed by Colonel Dunsterville was insufficient, that officer was again directed to ascertain precisely Sir Robert's wishes, and in the end a modified plan proposed by Sir Robert himself was adopted by Government without any alteration whatever.

"It can scarcely therefore be said with truth that the failures of the transport train have arisen from an obstinate adherence on the part of myself and my colleagues to a plan adopted by Government in preference to one proposed by Sir Robert Napier; the

Government desired an organization well understood in the country under muccadums, and that proposal was abandoned. Sir Robert Napier proposed a military organization, and in deference to him it was adopted.

"It may be said that the number of officers whose employment was sanctioned by the Government has been found utterly insufficient, and that Sir Robert Napier to obtain efficiency has been obliged largely to increase them. This is true, but, 1st, the number sanctioned was the number named by Sir Robert Napier; and, secondly, the number employed is equally largely in excess of the number proposed originally by Major Warden.

"In attempting to make it clear that the miscarriage of the transport train is not due to the decision of the Bombay Government over-ruling Sir Robert Napier, I must equally not be understood as attributing it to the adoption of his views. I have already said that apart from the weight of his authority there was much to be urged in their favour. The failure of the transport at the commencement of the campaign arose from a combination of circumstances; there were, practically speaking, neither mules or muleteers to be obtained here. Officers totally new to their work acquainted only with the languages of this country and ignorant of Arabic, Persian, or any of the languages spoken by their men, accustomed to the more docile and subservient races of Hindoostan, met for the first time on the shore at Zoulla men of more independent races utterly unable to comprehend a word addressed to them by those put over them, and who found themselves placed under a military discipline for which they had never engaged themselves. It is not to be wondered at that the first found themselves unable to command, or that the latter were not found willing to obey.

"If it be said that the same difficulty would have occurred, the same want of understanding would have been felt, if the organization had been non-military, I reply that in my opinion if a military system had not been adopted we should have had no difficulty in obtaining men in our own presidency and embodying a nucleus for a transport train to which the foreign muleteers would have readily attached themselves, and so fallen in with the system on which it was established.

"There are two circumstances which have occurred connected with the transport train which seem to me to justify the opinion I first expressed as to the organization required and to which I would draw attention.

"In the early days of the expedition continual and loud complaints were made of the turbulence and violence of the men engaged from Egypt and elsewhere, severe punishments were unsparingly resorted to, the lash was seldom at rest, the men were sent back to Suez, and in some cases were returned immediately on their arrival without trial. It afterwards appeared that some of these men were among the best of those who had been employed by the British Agents in Egypt, were recognized on their return as intelligent and willing men, and were at once re-employed. Even if nothing more had happened to prove the fact, it would seem not unfair to infer that the fault lay not with the men but the system under which they were placed. Later, however, in the expedition, the Commander-in-Chief found it necessary to put a portion of the train under the exclusive control of the Commissariat officer at Zoulla, and for this a large detachment of camels from Egypt with Egyptian camel-men were placed at his disposal. Colonel Lucas reverted to the organization under muccadums who were selected from the men on the principle well known in this country, and originally proposed for adoption by the Government. The men were found to be docile, intelligent, and contented, the portion of the train so organized was found to be efficient in a most marked degree, and I am inclined to agree with Colonel Lucas in his opinion that the same happy result would have been generally obtained throughout the train if the same system had been pursued.

"The second fact to which attention should be called is that the Punjab mule train has been from the commencement of the campaign noted for its efficiency. It is fair to ask if this has been secured by a military organization. The reply is that no such organization was adopted. The number of commissioned officers in command is no greater than that which I was seeking to adopt, the train has had no large staff of non-commissioned officers drawn from European or of subordinate non-commissioned officers selected from native regiments. It is in fact just such a corps as would without difficulty have been raised in our presidency if the men had not been deterred from engaging in what they considered a military service, and I see no reason why such a corps raised in Bombay should not have been as efficient and have done as good service as one raised on similar principles in another part of India.

"W. R. SEYMOUR V. FITZGERALD."

It is not for me to say how far *misapprehension* existed as to the course pursued by the Bombay Government with reference to the organization of the Train. The foregoing *resume* of correspondence connected therewith supplies abundant data for the formation of independent opinion. In addition to this, the able minute of His Excellency the Governor affords an insight into the view Government themselves take of the matter. Sir Seymour, no one doubts, honestly wished and endeavoured to do what was best; but he was swayed by a power behind the throne with which only those are acquainted who know intimately the detail working of Indian Governments. His colleagues misled him in the first instance, and it is to be feared the influence of the Secretary to Government in the Military Department was not for good.

At the same time, one or two remarks suggest themselves with reference to certain portions of His Excellency's minute, which it may not be out of place to record here. And first, as regards placing the Transport Train under the Commissariat, instead of under the Quartermaster General. His Excellency, in common with Mr. Ellis and Mr. Mansfield, expressed a strong opinion on the point, insisting on the Train being under the former department, and still maintains that opinion. Sir Seymour also observes that Sir Robert Napier "unhesitatingly withdrew" the proposal to place it under the Quartermaster General. This, however, does not seem to justify the interference of the Government in a matter of such vital importance; had three Civilians any right to hold 'strong opinions' in opposition to Sir Robert Napier, and were they not guilty of extreme rashness, bad taste, and presumption in giving effect to those opinions? It must be evident to every one that the Governor and his subordinates so recorded their opinions, as to show clearly they meant them to be respected, and is it surprising, then,

that Sir Robert, realizing the unspeakable value of time, should let the Government have their own way, in order that he might as speedily as possible get an organization of some kind or other? His Excellency the Governor has "had no reason since to doubt the soundness" of his original views. Has the Right Honourable gentleman forgotten the change introduced by Sir Robert Napier on the 14th of February, and the results of that change? The campaign had been all but brought to a stand-still owing to the state of the Train—a state brought about, *in a very great measure, if not entirely*, by defects in its organization. The officers were, as a rule, the very pick of the British and Indian services. On the above date, the Train was split in two, the Highland portion being placed immediately under the control of the Commander-in-Chief, through the Quartermaster General; and everybody knows how splendidly it worked. To that change, the improvement was due. An officer who has seen service in almost every quarter of the globe, and whose experience of transport questions, and questions connected therewith, entitle him to hold 'strong opinions' thereon, says :—

"A Transport Train, the organization of which is mili-
"tary, as the organization of every train ought to be, can
"never work under the Commissariat, when attached to
"an army before the enemy. The reasons are obvious
"to military men. In the first place, the two branches
"would not amalgamate, the orders of a non-combatant
"authority would never be obeyed with sufficient alacrity
"by the combatant element; indeed they might be dis-
"puted. Experience has repeatedly proved this. The
"non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the Train
"would soon become a mongrel lot, half soldiers and half
"civilians. They would soon lose their habits of discipline
"under officers whose duties are connected with the

"peaceful part of the campaign. Such a train would "look well enough on paper; but it would only be a "shadow. And this would soon be felt in a long and "arduous campaign."

Moreover, there is no doubt of the fact that the Lowland Train would have reached a state of efficiency very much sooner than it did, had the interference of Colonel H. W. Holland, the Controller of Transport and Supply, been less frequent and vexatious.

With regard to the next point in dispute (whether the Train should be a military organization), Sir Seymour again differed from Sir Robert Napier, and was again, as a matter of course, supported by Mr. Ellis and Mr. Mansfield. His Excellency, however, holds that as this opposition to Sir Robert's views was abandoned, the Government cannot be said to have thwarted his wishes. But it was not abandoned until Sir Robert proposed a 'modified plan,' and until after much time had been wasted when every hour was valuable. It was due to this, that the Train reached Zoula in a state of inefficiency, and at Zoula there was no opportunity for retrieving the past. And to this want of organization is due much of the difficulty experienced with Egyptians, Arabs, and others, want of organization brought about, not by the adoption of a military system, but by the adoption of no system whatever till the last moment. For this the Bombay Government *must* be held responsible.

It is amusing to find His Excellency the Governor holding to the opinion that the Punjab Train was a non-military organization, and just such a Train as he desired to raise in Bombay. The Highland Train, which consisted of the Punjab Train, together with two divisions of the Bombay Train, *was* a military organization, and was not managed by muccadums, as His Excellency seems to suppose. The divisions had fewer officers, non-commissioned officers, &c.,

than the other; but it is surely not the mere number of officers that makes an organization a military one. The Highland Train was organized as under. Each division of 2,000 mules had—

1 Captain.	1 Smith.
3 Subalterns.	10 Assistant Smiths.
4 European Inspectors from British Regiments.	1 Saddler.
20 Jemadars.	10 Assistant Saddlers.
80 Duffedars.	10 Bheesties.
667 Muleteers.	1 Salutree.
2 1st Class Farriers.	1 Writer.

Each division was sub-divided into troops of 150 mules each. Stables, watering, and all line duties were conducted at fixed hours, and with the same discipline as is enforced in cavalry regiments in India. There were no native inspectors; the jemadars of troops were more trusted to, they kept all troop accounts, thereby securing a superior standing and more influence over the men. Office, line, and road work was performed by the officers themselves.

Most persons will agree, from a perusal of the foregoing correspondence, that it was a piece of presumption on the part of the Bombay Government to interfere with Sir Robert Napier's plans in the slightest degree; and to the delay caused in the organization of the Train, through the persistency with which they clung to their "strong opinions," must be attributed the early troubles under which that unfortunate corps all but succumbed. Had the Honourable B. H. Ellis and his colleagues been in Abyssinia with their "strong opinions" and endless string of authorities, the Transport Train had never done a good day's work.

The campaign afforded an excellent opportunity of testing the qualities of Spanish, Egyptian, Indian, and Abyssinian mules. The Spanish are large and ill-bred, naturally of a weak constitution, and more suited for draught work, than for the pack saddle. They are unable to bear

great change of climate, and suffer more from want of sufficient food than do Indian mules. They not only require much grass, but they require to have it good; the dry and coarse stuff generally procurable in Abyssinia did not afford sufficient nourishment; and once these Spanish mules are in low condition, it is difficult to restore them, even with rest and grazing. There were a few well-bred mules among them, and these being well fed and groomed by the batteries, worked well. But generally, the Spanish were the worst in the Force. The Persian, Indian, and Egyptian mules are much more enduring than those from Spain; they required less grain, and will eat every description of grass, and thrive upon it. The Abyssinian mules are sleek and good-looking, but possess no powers of endurance. These broke down in much larger proportion than any other. The favourite mule was the small but tractable and plucky animal from the Punjaub.

The Veterinary Surgeons consider the chief cause of sickness and casualties among the mules, to have been hard work at great altitudes, constant exposure, want of rest, insufficiency of food, want of grass, irregularity of feeding, galls from bad saddles, want of time and means for repairing the same, and occasionally carelessness in saddling and loading.

The strength of the Lowland Train on the 1st of May was as follows:—

83	Officers.	5,936	Camels.
11	Veterinary Surgeons.	2,348	Mules.
486	Inspectors.	1,666	Ponies.
14	Interpreters.	1,791	Donkeys.
706	Muccadums.	1,282	Draught Bullocks.
7,728	Drivers.	5,493	Pack Do.
431	Artificers.	305	Mule Carts.
227	Water Bullocks.	396	Bullock Carts.

On the same date, the strength of the Highland Train was as follows :—

20	Officers.	3,308	Drivers.
4	Veterinary Surgeons.	115	Artificers.
14	Inspectors.	7,690	Mules and Ponies.
473	Jemadars & Duffedars.		

The drivers throughout the Train were unqualified, as a rule, for the performance of the most simple part of their duties, having been the offscourings of the Indian, Turkish, Egyptian and Persian bazaars. Such men can only be made to work properly after a long course of drill, and under the strictest possible supervision. Likewise, the nucleus of a Transport Corps should constantly be maintained in time of peace, round which recruits may rally in time of war, and for this purpose a Transport Train depôt should be formed in each of the presidencies of India, so organized as to be capable of indefinite expansion at any moment.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Such is the importance attached in most parts of "jealous Abyssinia" to the profession of Christianity, and such the hatred manifested to the followers of the Prophet and the heathen generally, that a short chapter on the Abyssinian Church may not be unacceptable to the general reader. To those who were members of the Abyssinia Field Force, such a chapter cannot but possess interest. They can never forget the frequency with which they found it necessary to profess themselves Christians, in their dealings with the people of the country, the interest with which they visited the various churches, and the pains taken by Sir Robert Napier to make known the community of faith that existed between England and Ethiopia. Nor

can they forget the "capering clergy" who so lustily sang the songs of David before the Commander-in-Chief at Bet Hor and elsewhere, the sound of cymbal and drum mingling with the harsh brazen voice of the priests, the elders, and the deacons. Sir Robert, it may be noted, had saved all copies of the Scriptures found in Magdala, not that he might carry them out of the country, or dispose of them as "loot," but that he might restore them to the churches throughout the country which Theodorus had plundered. Joy on account of the receipt of these and other presents, tuned their mouths to sing no less than did their desire to welcome the conqueror.

For much of the information contained in this chapter, I am indebted to that veteran missionary and traveller, the Reverend Dr. Wilson, whose valuable work, "The Lands of the Bible," I have constantly consulted.

The Abyssinian Church is an offshoot of the Coptic Church, or Church of Egypt, emphatically so called. Its adherents occupy the whole of the country marked in the maps as Abyssinia, and are hemmed in more or less closely on all sides by heathen and Mahomedan tribes. Sir William Harris also informs us, that "there exist in various quarters, isolated communities professing the Christianity of Ethiopia, who for a long period of years have successfully held their position among the mountain fastnesses, in the very heart of the now Pagan and Muhammadan country." For the sake of precision I shall quote a few notices regarding them, gleaned by Dr. Wilson from Sir William Harris's work :—

"One of the most remarkable of these seats is in the Lake Zuai." Its five islands "are covered with lofty trees, and contain upwards of three thousand Christian houses." "In Garague, the population are almost exclusively Christian. Twelve isolated churches, previously unheard of, were discovered a few years since, on the conquest of Yeya, by Sahela Selassie [King of

Shoa]; and between Garro and Metcha, where forest commences in the south of Shoa, is a small tract peopled by Christians, who reside entirely in caves among the mountains, as a measure of security against the heathen, by whom they are compassed in on every side." "Eight days' journey from Aimellele, on the frontier of Guragué, is Cambat, a small mountainous province, lying due east of Zingero. With exception of a few Muhammadan rovers, this independent state is inhabited solely by Christians." "Wollamo is another Christian province, under an independent sovereign, lying below Cambat, to the south-eastward of Zingero." "Eight days' journey beyond Zingero, is the country of Mager, the king of which, by name Dégaio, is represented to be a very powerful monarch. Korchasi, which is famous for the great river Wabi, is peopled by Christians, as is Sidama also, and both are surrounded on all sides by the heathen." "But of all the isolated remnants of the ancient Ethiopic empire to the south of Abyssinia, Susa would appear to be the most important and the most powerful. This kingdom is situated beyond Caffa, and extends to the head of the Gitché, which rises in Chara-Nara, and is one of the principal sources of the Gochob. * * * The language spoken is quite distinct from that of the Galla, from the Amharic, and from the ancient Giz or Ethiopic. It possesses a written character."

Christianity was introduced into Abyssinia about the year 327 A. D., by Meropius, a Tyrian merchant, and his nephews Frumentius and Ædesius. Having explored some part of the country, doubtless with the object of establishing trade, they set sail on their return; but, their vessel having sustained a disaster at sea, they were compelled to run for the nearest port. Here they fell into unfriendly hands; the merchant was murdered, and the youths sold into captivity. Being educated, they were then, as foreigners are now, valuable at Court, where Frumentius was appointed Secretary. Ultimately they received their manumission; but, on the death of the king, the queen regent prevailed upon them to stay in the country, and watch over the fortunes of her young son. During their stay they engaged in missionary work, and

their labours were blessed. When the young king attained his majority, the brothers left the country. On arrival at Alexandria, Frumentius acquainted the patriarch Athanasius with the success attending his missionary labours, and was by him consecrated and ordained a bishop to the Ethiopians. Returning to Axum, the old capital of Tigre, he preached Christianity with such success that the king and many of the people embraced the faith he proclaimed. This first bishop now occupies a place among the saints of the Abyssinian church, under the name of Salama. As Frumentius was ordained in Egypt, so have the Abunas, or chief ecclesiastics, been ever since. Abyssinia has at present no Abuna, and in the present state of the country it may probably be some time before one is appointed; but that appointment, when it is made, will be made by the patriach of the Coptic Church. The last Abuna died in 1867 at Magdala, and was buried in the church there. He will long be remembered by Englishmen as the constant benefactor and friend of the European captives.

The Abyssinian clergy are chiefly remarkable for their ignorance and superstition. In point of absurd legends, vain and superstitious ceremonies, and the worship of saints and angels, the church in Ethiopia far outrivals the Coptic Church from which it sprung. The extent of its veneration for biblical characters may be understood from the fact that Pontius Pilate and his wife Procla are numbered among its saints, the former because he washed his hands before condemning our Saviour, and the latter because she warned her husband "Meddle not with that just person." Yea, Balaam's ass is a sainted animal, because it refused to carry its master on his ungodly mission, to curse the children of Israel. Qualifications for the ministerial office are by no means prohibitory. Bishop Gobat says :—"The ordination of priests is easily performed. It is sufficient for a man to

know the letters of his alphabet, with a few prayers, and to give two pieces of salt to the interpreter of the Abuna, or Coptic bishop, after which he receives the imposition of hands, without examination or exhortation; and this is the reason why those who are better instructed would be ashamed to be made priests. There are exceptions; but I am speaking of the generality." Harris says the clergy are neither more nor less than "twelve thousand clerical drones." Public worship is a meaningless and ridiculous ceremony. How closely does the following correspond with our experiences of the thanksgivings that were so painfully frequent in Dalanta and Wadela:—"Capering and beating the ground with their feet, the priests stretch out their crutches toward each other with frantic gesticulations, while the clash of the timbrel, the sound of the drum, and the howling of harsh voices, complete a most strange form of devotion." Scripture and mythology alike contribute to their sacred writings. The life of St. George, their patron saint, the miracles of Tekla Haimanot, of the Blessed Virgin, and of innumerable mythical personages, supply them with abundant matter for such doctrine, reproof, and instruction as their priests care to impart. The lessons are all read in ancient Ethiopic—a dead letter to the congregations. Tekla Haimanot's history is decidedly peculiar, and his preaching must have been possessed of extraordinary power. He made such an impression on the devil by preaching, that he (Satan) determined to become a monk for forty years. This same saint, we are told, stood forty years on one leg praying, and would no doubt have stood forty more, had not his leg broken. "There are twenty-four elders around the throne of God, with censers in their hands, serving God, and Tekla Haimanot is the twenty-fifth. He had six wings like angels!" With regard to the books found in the country, Dr. Wilson says:—"The books found

in the country, besides the scriptures, are 108 in number. Copies of all of them have been taken to Germany by my friend Dr. Roth, the naturalist of the British embassy, and deposited in the Protestant College of Erlangen. They consist principally of legendary lives of the saints, monks, and other personages, of abridgments of scripture history, sadly corrupted by absurd traditions and extravagant inventions; of collections of hymns and prayers, some of which are intended to frighten evil spirits; and of ecclesiastical canons and summaries of doctrine. Taking them as a whole, they are more fitted to mislead than to edify, to nurse superstition than to beget a right faith and cherish a right devotion. A few of them, perhaps, are worthy of examination, as contributing in some degree to throw light on the religious history of Ethiopia." It is still hoped that the Gospel of St. Thomas may be discovered in Abyssinia, and special search was made for it during the campaign, but without success.

Intercourse with the Jews has led to the adoption of many Jewish customs and beliefs by the Abyssinians. They circumcise on the eighth day; they hold unclean animals in holy abhorrence; they observe the last day of the week as a day of rest, in addition to the Lord's day; they wear a blue riband from which a cross is often suspended, as a symbol of their Christianity; in their worship they employ all the musical instruments mentioned in the psalms; they abstain from eating of the sinew that shrank, and from blood, &c. Dr. Wilson considers it probable that the Jews extended from Egypt and Yemen to Ethiopia before the Christian era. Certainly large numbers of Jews fled thither for refuge after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Emperor Titus, and on the persecution raised by Adrian. Their descendants are known as Felashas, and are estimated by Dr. Wolff at two hundred thousand.

Corrupt and depraved as the religion of Abyssinia is,

the people, as is well known, deal with it as a matter of the greatest gravity and importance. What but religious feelings could make them submit to all the penances and fasts which their priests and canons prescribe? Dr. Wilson also records that he noticed that the most outwardly devout pilgrims visiting Jerusalem were from the land of Habesh. Bishop Gobat writes—"We may still congratulate them [the Abyssinians] for the little they have preserved of Christianity, for it is to this, after all, that the Christian traveller is obliged to attribute all those traces in the character of the Abyssinians which, in many respects, render them superior to all the nations of Africa." Says Sir William Harris—"Abyssinia as she now is, presents the most singular compound of vanity, meekness, and ferocity,—of devotion, superstition, and ignorance. But, compared with the other nations of Africa, she unquestionably holds a high station. She is superior in arts, and in agriculture,—in laws, religion, and social condition to all the benighted children of the sun. The small portion of good which does exist may be justly ascribed to the remains of the wreck of Christianity, which, although stranded on a rocky shore, and buffeted by the storms of ages, is not yet overwhelmed."

The Church of England Missionary Society has had its attention directed to Abyssinia for nearly fifty years. In 1820, an entire version of the Bible into Amharic was purchased on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and copies have been distributed by the various missionaries who have from time to time laboured in the country. Mr. (afterwards Bishop) Gobat and Mr. Kugler first visited Abyssinia in 1839; Mr. Isenberg, Dr. Wolff, Dr. Krapf, Mr. Stern, Mr. Flad and Mr. Staiger followed, though it was only at intervals that they found opportunity of engaging in missionary work. The unsettled state of the country, and the opposition offered to them by

the Roman Catholic priests and emissaries, caused constant interruptions, and not unfrequently exposed their lives to imminent danger.

Roman Catholicism flourishes chiefly in the north of Abyssinia, where Maltese and Italian priests have from time to time established themselves. In Tigre it is by no means unusual to meet Abyssinians possessing a knowledge of Italian, that language having been the medium through which they had been instructed in the texts and rites of the religion they profess. Rome opened up intercourse with the Abyssinian church through the Portuguese, towards the close of the fifteenth century. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Order of Jesus, was very desirous of proceeding to Abyssinia in person, in the prosecution of his project, to lay the world at the feet of the Pope; but he afterwards gave up the intention, entrusting the work to thirteen of his most ardent and trusted followers. Their success was very limited; the opposition they met with was very determined, and, at the wish of the Pope, they were recalled. About half a century ago missions were again planted, and these seem to have made far more converts than any other have done. The late Abuna, whose death left the Abyssinian Church without a head, has been a grand opportunity for the development of the designs of Rome, which will doubtless be taken full advantage of. The deceased patriarch was strongly opposed to Rome, and being influential with the chiefs in power, kept her missionaries in check. Now, however, unless the field is pre-occupied, they will have everything their own way, and will be greatly aided by the anxiety which all the chiefs more or less feel, to have some connection with European nations. If the adoption of the doctrines of the Church of Rome will but strengthen his position, there is hardly a chief in Abyssinia who would not immediately submit to her yoke. And Rome has always made a point

of turning the internal condition of a country to the best account, arraying on her side both civil and military power. Of this Dr. Krapf gives numberless examples, in his "Travels and Missionary Labours in Eastern Africa."

While Rome is powerful in the North of Abyssinia, it is also there, perhaps, that the gospel is best known in its purity. There are at Adowa two brothers, Gabroo and Meertcha Worke, who received a good English education at Bombay, under the Reverend Dr. Wilson, by whom they were admitted members of the Free Church of Scotland. These brothers were recommended to Dr. Wilson's care by his friend Dr. Wolff, and were brought to Bombay by their father in 1837. They were received into Dr. Wilson's family, and instructed there, as also at the Free General Assembly's Institution. Their after history is briefly told in the *Oriental Christian Spectator*:—

"After both joining the Protestant Church they paid a visit to Abyssinia in 1843, and returned to India in 1845 for the completion of their education in connexion with the Free Church of Scotland's Mission. They resolved to devote themselves, if practicable, to the dissemination of Christian truth in their native country; and with that object in view, and encouraged by the native church in Bombay and other Christian friends interested in the evangelization of the great continent of Africa, and especially in the revival of evangelical religion among the ignorant though independent Christians of Ethiopia, they left Bombay in 1849, carrying with them a considerable supply of scriptures in Ethiopic, Amharic, and Arabic, and desirous of founding a school, and addressing their brethren according to the flesh on their spiritual interests as in the good providence of God they might find opportunity. They met with a kind reception from their countrymen high and low; and they have been able, to a very considerable extent, to effect the instructional objects which they had in view. They put into circulation the scriptures which they received from the Bombay Bible Society; they founded a school in which the Bible is used as the principal class-book; and they have largely engaged in religious conference with the Abyssinians of all grades of society."

Mr. Gabroo Worke afterwards returned to Bombay on a visit to the friends of the agency of himself and his brother, and with a view to obtain additional supplies of the Holy Scriptures and other means of advancing the cause to which they had devoted themselves. At a missionary meeting, he delivered an address, the substance of which he committed to writing. From it I make the following extracts :—

"Of the state of the Church of Abyssinia, we have only to say, that she is very much defiled, and corrupted like the Greek Church, or rather the Coptic, of which she is a branch. Yet she boasts very much of her purity, and the antiquity of her faith in Christianity. There are no images in the Churches, such as those of Mary, and Paul, etc. as in the Romish Church. But I am sorry to say there are many pictures, which ignorant and poor people do honor. The churches are built in a circular form The first court is occupied by the Daftara, an assembly of learned men that sing at the time of prayer. The second court is occupied on the one side by the men, and the other by the women. The middle court is the Holy of holies. The ark is placed in the centre of the Kudus (the Holy). No one touches it except the priests, who say that the touch of it will kill a man. The Kurban (the sacrifice or sacrament) is performed every day, between eight and nine A. M., except on Wednesday and Friday, the weekly fasting days. They celebrate the Kurban at 3 P. M. Axum is the principal and holiest convent in Abyssinia. There are also some other great convents, such as Lalibala, Waldiba, Dabradammo, and Dabramizen. The Priests and the Daftaras are very glad to hear of the death of any rich man. First, they get money for the *Fathat*, the dying ceremony, to smooth the way to heaven after death. What folly, what a great folly it is in them to think, that prayer and the supplication of the Priests will conduct a man to heaven after his death. After man dies he must go either to the blissful heaven or to the miserable hell. Secondly, they get a great deal of eating and drinking for the *Taskar*, or funeral ceremony.

"Husbands and wives are allowed to take the Lord's Supper without any deep inquiry ; and before their taking it the first time, they make an agreement that the wife is to be the heir of half the husband's property. A man puts away his wife from dislike, and

the wife her husband, still there is no prohibition of their taking the Lord's Supper. But if a man or a woman is married five times, and the husband or the wife be dead, they are not allowed to take the sacrament after the fifth marriage. * * * In regard to our School we have only to say, that we had about 60 boys in it. We had a priest employed for collecting the boys. Some of the boys had read the four Gospels and the Epistles; and some of them read Psalms, etc. I am sorry to say, that at the beginning of the year 1854, small-pox broke out in our town, which destroyed many youths as well as the aged people; and the School of course was dispersed for a season. The parents took away their children to some other places for safety. I left Abyssinia before the ceasing of the plague; and I do not know what took place after my departure. * * * Although we have suffered mocking and hatred from our countrymen, yet thanks be unto God that we are kept to the present time in perfect safety. They are not so hard-hearted people as Hindus, Parsis, and the Romanists, as far as we are concerned, to thirst after our lives. The high priest tried to expel us, like the English missionaries, from our beloved home, by giving false accounts of us to the great *dajazmat*, (warrior chief) Ube, as he had done with regard to the others; but he was not successful. His deceitful counsel was brought to nothing. It is the work of the Lord which has kept us safe from all their evil devices. We have visited the Dajazmat twice in a year. He is quite agreeable with us. The filial love of Abyssinia is quite different from what I see and hear of in India. If the whole nation were to rise against us, they will try only to expel us from the country; but I am sure they will never have the idea of killing us."

These two brothers were of the greatest service to the English and to Prince Kassa of Tigrè during the campaign; there is reason to believe, too, that they were the means of inclining Kassa to open up friendly communications with the Pioneer Force, and to maintain cordial relations with it.

APPENDIX.

SIR ROBERT NAPIER'S DESPATCH TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA.

THE BATTLE OF AROGEE, AND STORMING OF MAGDALA.

MAGDALA, *April 14th.*

RIGHT HON'BLE SIR,—I have the honour, in continuation of my despatch dated the 5th instant, to report for your information that it was necessary to halt on Dalanta until the 9th instant, to concentrate the force and to gain information regarding the state of affairs to my front and generally around me. The chiefs of Dalanta and Daoont both visited me during that time ; and, principally through the personal exertions of Captain Speedy amongst the villages of Daoont, and the endeavours of M. Munzinger, considerable quantities of grain were brought into our camp.

On the 7th I received a letter from Emam Ahmad, son of Masteeat, one of the rival queens of the Wollo Gallas. The influence of the Emam extends over thousands of predatory Muhammadan Horse, whose country lies around Magdala. He is the virtual chief of the subjects of Masteeat, though the latter's own authority is also great. Masteeat is the rival of Werkait, another Queen of the Gallas, whose nominal ascendancy is at present established through the assistance of Manilek, King of Shoa, though the majority of the Galla people support Masteeat. Information had reached me that Masteeat had very recently made friendly advances to Theodore, thinking this, no doubt, a good opportunity of enlisting his influence on her side against Werkait. Theodore is said to have accepted the presents she had sent him. Notwithstanding this alleged intrigue, the letter addressed to me by the Emam, her son, gave expression to feelings of the utmost detestation on the part of his family towards King Theodore.

As it was very possible that Theodore might flee from Magdala, it seemed to me of importance to secure the co-operation of a tribe possessed of so much power as the Gallas, in preventing his escape. It was chiefly with this object that I had procured the appointment to the expedition of Meer Akbar Allee, of Hydrabad

in the Deccan, whose services have been already referred to, and who, as a Saiad who has visited Mecca, was well adapted to attach the followers of Masteeat to our cause. He was despatched accordingly to Emam Ahmad, bearing a reply to the Emam's letter, together with a horse and other gifts. News of his interview with Emam Ahmad and Masteeat has not yet been received; but the impression produced among the Gallas by his arrival among them has apparently been all that could be wished. There seems every reason to believe that Theodore's return to Magdala after his attempted flight, under circumstances which will be detailed farther on, was owing to the way in which the hills around the fortress were occupied by the Gallas.

On the 9th I advanced towards the banks of the Bashilo, and encamped near the edge of the Dalanta plateau, from which could be seen, in the midst of a vast panorama of mountains and valleys, two of the spurs,—namely Selassie and Fahla—of the mountain of which Magdala forms the third spur. Magdala itself was, from this position, concealed by Fahla and Selassie, and was distant about twelve miles from where we were. Heavy rain fell during the afternoon, and the night was very cold. On the following morning the first and second brigades proceeded to cross the Bashilo. The river lies at the bottom of a deep valley among the mountains. The descent is in some places very steep, and represents a fall of 3,900 feet, very unequally distributed, in $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The bed of the river itself is broad and rocky, and a considerable and now muddy stream flows in it at present, reaching nearly to our horses' girths. The ascent on the opposite side was very difficult. Theodore had lately conveyed his guns across the valley, and had constructed a road which facilitated our passage. But the ascent was so severe that perhaps this day's march was more trying than any of the former ones to our troops.

No reply had been received from the King to my letter of the 3rd; neither had we any means of conjecturing how he meant to receive us. Several copies of my letter had been sent to him, but we had not learned if he had received any of them, though it has since been ascertained that a copy was placed in his hands on the day we were crossing the Bashilo, and had caused an outburst of anger at a servant of Queen Victoria having presumed to address him.

Before crossing the Bashilo, I had caused to be prepared a second letter, intending that it should be forwarded if occasion offered. As it proved, however, no opportunity of sending it occurred.

At four o'clock on the 10th instant, the head of the column, after traversing upwards of ten miles of mountain and valley, had reached the plateau of Affajo. The plateau looks down upon the Arogee plain, on the other side of which rises the mountain height of Fahla. This mountain has an elevation of about 1,000 feet above the spot which we had reached, and on its ridge the King had placed seven guns. It was not until shortly before these opened fire upon us that we were aware of their being in position there. Owing to the very great height from which the guns were fired, the first round shot fell near where the column had halted, and our position, though distant over 3,000 yards, was well within the extreme range of all the heavier guns.

Shortly after the King's artillery had commenced to play upon us, large bodies of Abyssinians were seen descending the steep face of the mountain to attack us. Our assailants showed so much bravery that it was believed at the time that Theodore was leading them in person. But this was not the case. The King himself remained on the height, directing the fire of his guns. Our shells, rockets and Snider rifles taught the enemy a lesson which will long be remembered in this country. Their loss is computed at seven hundred killed and twelve hundred wounded, including many chiefs of note.

It was nearly dark before the assailants were completely driven off, and the fire of their artillery silenced. A suitable position having been taken in the immediate vicinity, the first brigade bivoucked for the night on the ground, and the wounded were attended to. Our own loss amounted to only twenty wounded. The night passed without any alarm, the enemy, as afterwards appeared, having become paralysed by the blow which had been inflicted on them.

The next morning, Lieutenant Prideaux and Mr. Flad appeared in my camp, on the part of King Theodore, from whom they delivered, verbally, the message that till yesterday he had thought himself the greatest man in the world, but had now found out that there were others stronger than he, and that he desired to be reconciled to our Government.

In conversation with Mr. Flad, several facts regarding current events were noted. The numbers of the enemy in the engagement of the day previous was estimated at between six and seven thousand. About three thousand of these were musketeers, armed chiefly with matchlocks; and there were upwards of a thousand

soldiers in addition who carried percussion muskets. There was no regular cavalry, but the chiefs of the army were all mounted on horses or mules. The Europeans assert that the guns were served not by them but by Abyssinians. Theodore's favourite cannon, which he had named after himself, burst on the first discharge. The fire of the Rocket Battery had produced a powerful effect on the King's mind, and his impatience, after the battle was over, to avert the danger of a second attack by effecting a reconciliation with us, was great. He had displayed to the last the characteristic cruelty which prevents us from in any way regretting his fate. There is no room for doubt that about two hundred Abyssinian prisoners, in confinement for very trivial offences, were put to cruel deaths by his order the day before the battle. He had commenced the massacre with his own hands. The remains of the victims are still to be seen at the foot of the rock from which they were hurled.

Lieutenant Prideaux and Mr. Flad, in conveying to me the King's message, came accompanied by the Dejaz Alamee, son-in-law of Theodore. I avoided entering into unnecessary conversation with his messengers, and sent any answer in writing.

In the course of the same day, Lieutenant Prideaux and Mr. Flad returned to my camp with an unfavourable report of the way in which my reply had been received by the King, who, on understanding its purport, had become enraged, and ordered his former messengers to carry back to me a document which he caused hastily to be written by his scribe, and which, on opening, I found to contain enclosed in it, in the same cover, my own letter of that morning, which the King had thus returned to me, he having conceived himself insulted, I am told, by my having presumed to address him at all. The Dejaz Alamee did not on this occasion accompany Lieutenant Prideaux. A translation of the paper sent me by the King will be forwarded hereafter : it was not in the form of a letter, because he believed it beneath his dignity to hold such correspondence with me ; neither was it sealed.

It was very trying, in the aspect presented at this particular juncture by our relations with the King, to persevere in the course which I had adopted, as the right one, since the lives of so many of our countrymen seemed to be endangered by that course. Nevertheless, I felt that I had no alternative, and therefore requested Lieutenant Prideaux and Mr. Flad to return to the King and say to him that I could receive no further communications from him until my demand of that morning had been complied with.

But, happily, the King's own mind had undergone a kind of reaction almost as soon as he had despatched Lieutenant Prideaux with the paper referred to. He had recoiled from the possible consequences of his own act ; and, after an attempt to commit suicide with a pistol, which was prevented by his attendants, had sent off Mr. Mayer, one of the European prisoners, to announce to me that all the captives that we sought were on their way to my camp. Lieutenant Prideaux, who on returning to the King, met Mr. Mayer coming down the mountain with this most unexpected intelligence, and he and Mr. Flad, turning back with Mr. Mayer, again appeared at my tent, bearing the joyful news, but not charged with any message from the King, touching his own submission to Her Majesty. Soon after dark, Mr. Rassam himself arrived in camp, a free man, and with him, came Consul Cameron, Dr. Blanc, Rev. Mr. Stern, Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal, Mr. Kerans and Pietro. These had all been liberated. They were escorted, on the part of the King, by Mr. Mayer, Mr. Waldemair, Mr. Saalmuller, and Mr. Moritz, artizans, and by the Dejaz Alamee and Aito Samuel. It was not understood whether the German artizans above-named were expected by the King to return to him, or had been liberated also ; but I judged it better that they should return to Magdala the next morning until regularly discharged by Theodore.

Although matters had thus assumed a most hopeful aspect, yet there remained ground for anxiety. Mrs. Flad, whose Christian fortitude during all her trials had gained for her universal esteem, was still in the King's hands, and so were many other Europeans for whom we were bound to take thought. It was believed that they too had been liberated, and had been prevented only by illness or other causes not resting with the King, from proceeding to our camp. Still the uncertain and dangerous temper of Theodore was too well-known to admit of our thinking the life of any one safe while within his reach.

Early next morning I received by the hands of the King's scribe and Mr. Bendir, one of his German servants, an Amharic letter, which on being translated to me verbally by Mr. Rassam and Aito Samuel (the latter rendering it from the original into Arabic, and the former interpreting the Arabic again into English) was found to be an apology for the rude missive of the previous day. The King endeavoured to explain away the tone he had adopted in the letter, by informing me that it had been written after he had made up his mind to take away his life. He related how his attempt to

carry out his design had failed ; but now he desired friendship, and was prepared to send down to us at once every European, along with an offering of a few cows, as it was the Easter feast. My reply was conveyed verbally, because of my wish to avoid farther correspondence with the King, whom I once more referred to my written communication of the day before. Mr. Rassam and others, however, acquired the impression that the cattle mentioned in the letter had been accepted by me, as they certainly would have been had the offering accompanied or signified Her Majesty's acquiescence in the proposal of the previous day.

The Dejaz Alamee, who had spent the night in my camp, carried back to Theodorus my verbal message to his second letter ; and with the Dejaz went Aito Samuel, Mr. Flad, and the four Germans, who had escorted down Mr. Rassam's party the evening before. I did not think it necessary that Lieutenant Prideaux should return to Magdala on this occasion, because he was a member of Mr. Rassam's party, and therefore had been duly dismissed by the King.

Mr. Flad has reported as follows what took place when he and his companions reached the King's presence with my message on the morning alluded to. The Dejaz Alamee delivered my compliments to the King, my acknowledgment of the arrival in my camp of Mr. Rassam's party, and my reiterated demand that the remainder of the Europeansshould be sent to me. Theodore at once replied— "Well, I give every one of them permission to leave Magdala." The King then asked whether, at the time when Mr. Flad and his companions had left my camp, his scribe and Mr. Bendir had arrived there with his letter. Aito Samuel replied "Yes, your "letter was presented to the Commander-in-Chief and translated." The King enquired what answer had been given about the offered cattle. Samuel replied that I had signified my willingness to accept them. His Majesty then ordered a thousand oxen and five hundred sheep to be taken to my camp. When it was reported to me that the animals had arrived at one of the outlying piquets, I gave orders that they should not be admitted within my piquets, until His Majesty's full acceptance of my conditions of the previous day should enable me to receive them, or assume towards him any friendly bearing whatever.

In the course of that day (the day before yesterday) every European in the King's hands arrived safely in my camp, with the exception of M. Bardel, who, though liberated by the King, had

been prevented, I believe by severe illness, from leaving Magdala, and who had not even sent me a message to explain his delay.

But no sign was made by the King of acceding to the still more important demand that had been made of him, and submitting himself to Her Majesty to Queen. The considerations which, with the lives of so many of our countrymen in his hands, had impelled me to impose this condition upon him, had lost none of their force now. It was essential for the vindication of our national honour, which he had so grossly insulted, that he should be removed for ever from his place. We could not have reached Magdala in this season unless we had been aided by the country. Kassa's supplies of flour had rendered us for the time independent of the failure of Zoula to supply us ; the grain of Enderta and Agame had enabled our transport animals to live and advance. But this aid was given me in the full belief that we would rid the people of Theodore ; and, had we failed to do so, we should probably have had to fight our way out of the country. No doubt can from the first have existed in Theodore's mind as to the purport of my demand, because the letter conveying it was translated to him by his own servants, and his remarks at the time showed that he understood every word of it. His failure to submit himself, therefore, left no other course open to us but to proceed towards him as an enemy.

Early yesterday morning, intelligence which seemed reliable, was brought me that His Majesty with about fifty followers had fled from Magdala during the night. This was confirmed by the appearance of several chiefs who offered to surrender into our hands the two strongholds of Fahla and Selassie.

I at once sent word to the Gallas offering a reward of fifty thousand dollars for Theodore's capture, should he really have escaped ; and as soon as measures had been taken for the protection of the chiefs and people among the King's adherents who might choose to surrender, I proceeded to occupy Fahla and Selassie, with the same force, and in the same order, that I had designed for the assault.

While the column was ascending the mountain, contradictory statements regarding Theodore were brought to me. Hardly had one messenger confirmed the report of his flight than another would come with the information that he had returned to Magdala, and was busily engaged in massacring the Abyssinian prisoners confined there, to be followed by a third stating that he had committed suicide.

Fahla and Islamgee were occupied by our troops without any resistance being offered. The people everywhere laid down their arms, and approached us with all confidence. It is impossible to form a correct estimate of their numbers; they covered the whole face of the hill, and the paths leading from it were thronged for many hours during their migration. It is believed that the number could not have been less than from twenty-five to thirty thousand, of whom about a third were armed men. The two hills formed a very strong position, and, if they had been defended with ordinary determination, would have caused very serious loss of life in their capture. Both of them communicated with Magdala itself; but what was the state of matters in that stronghold remained as much a problem as ever.

A desultory fire from small guns had been maintained from the walls for some time after Theodore's followers had retired within the fortress. It was said that Theodore himself, with a few of his soldiers, had galloped out of the gate on the approach of our troops, and challenged a party of cavalry to combat; but it was not possible to say certainly if it was he, though it now seems probable it was. He did not, however, approach near enough to give an opportunity of intercepting his retreat to the fortress. With the help of our telescopes a good view of the interior of Magdala was obtained. Whatever number of defenders the fort contained was studiously concealed. It was plain, however, that the place was not abandoned, as the gate which had been open on our first approach was perceived to be closed. A few figures were seen in different parts of the fort, and an officer thought he recognised Theodorus himself.

About noon I directed a sharp cannonade to be opened upon the gates of the fortress, without, however, calling forth any demonstration in reply. In the absence of such, and in consideration of the number of women and children in Magdala, it was not thought necessary to advance our guns near enough to produce anything like a general destructive effect upon the place.

About four P. M. the 33rd Foot was ordered to advance and storm the fortress. Led by Major Cooper, and keeping up a continuous fire upon the defences, this fine regiment soon surmounted the steep precipitous cliff which lay between them and the outer gate, notwithstanding the heavy fire of the garrison from behind their defences. Here their progress was arrested, as it was found that the gate had been blocked up from within, by means of large

blocks piled in the gateway. A company of Royal Engineers, under the command of Major Pritchard, had accompanied the advance party. But it was easier to enter the citadel by clambering with the help of scaling ladders over the fortifications on either side, which consisted of a masonry wall and very formidable thorn defence surmounting a scarped rock, than it would have been to blow open the gate. When the place had been entered, another gate, at the end of a long tortuous passage between two lines of rock, had to be carried.

Altogether this fortress is one of the strongest, even when its own proper defences have been reached, that I have ever seen. Its position, with reference to its outworks of Fahla and Selassie, adds so much to its strength, that it might be made quite impregnable. If Theodore had been properly supported by his soldiers, we could not have escaped very severe loss in entering it. As it was, however, his army had been so completely demoralized by the severity of the loss inflicted on them two days before, that the troops remaining faithful to Theodore were very few; and when they found that their unscientific defences gave them no opportunity to inflict loss upon their assailants, without exposing themselves, which our rapid fire rendered fatal to them, on the death of the King all survivors abandoned resistance and made their escape by the Kaffir Burr Gate. The kind treatment bestowed upon their wounded had also produced a strong impression on their minds. It has since been ascertained that Theodore left Magdala that morning intending to seek safety in some distant province; but only a few chiefs followed him out of the gate, and with the fear of his mortal enemies, the Gallas, before his eyes, he could not venture to leave Magdala with so small an escort.

Every armed man who met our column after the fortress had been entered fell under the fire of the Sniders, and the bodies of several chiefs of distinction who had remained faithful to their master to the last, lay close behind the outer and inner gates. Theodore himself was found lying dead some way up the narrow path that led from the gate to the palace. A bullet had passed through his head. The medical report shows that he is believed to have died at the last moment by his own hand.

At the request of the widow of the Emperor, the remains of her husband have been interred under the orders of the officer commanding in Magdala. No definite arrangements have yet been made for the disposal of her son, who is a boy of about eight years of age.

The property of the late king is being collected in the regular manner. His crown and royal seal have been taken possession of in Her Majesty's name, and will be forwarded to England by a suitable opportunity. Measures are being taken for the protection of the inhabitants of Magdala. Theodore's guns have been destroyed by blasting, and the fortress itself will be dismantled.

The liberated prisoners leave for the coast immediately, and I hope to commence my return march towards Zoula on the 18th instant.

Every endeavour will now be used to convey the expeditionary army with the least possible delay out of this country.—I have, &c.

R. NAPIER, *Lieutenant-General,*
Commander-in-Chief.

SIR ROBERT NAPIER'S MILITARY DESPATCH.

Commander-in-Chief's Offices, Head-quarters Camp, Antalo, May 12, 1868.

RIGHT HON. SIR,—On the 3rd April, when encamped on the Waddela plateau, I received intimation from the chiefs of Dalanta, that Theodore, having moved from Magdala, and encamped on the plain of Arogie, was preparing for an expedition. Letters from the captives also warned me to be on my guard. Between the British force and the plain of Dalanta lay the Jedda ravine, 3,400 feet deep. As the passage of this formidable obstacle, so easily defensible, could not have been effected in the face of an enemy without serious loss, I made a forced march of eighteen miles, crossed the Jedda, and established myself on the plain of Dalanta. The mere distance in miles gives little idea of the labour and fatigue of the march; the excessively steep descent and ascent and the great heat were very distressing for troops heavily weighted. Theodore, however, did not cross the Bashilo, but plundered and burnt the villages between that river and Magdala, which had always been faithful to and trusted him. From the edge of the Dalanta plain I obtained a distant but clear view of the position of Magdala and its approaches. I was able with a good telescope to appreciate the formidable character of the whole position, and became aware that I should require all the infantry that I could possibly collect to make the attack effective, and that every cavalry soldier that I could bring forward would be necessary for the investment. Even with all the force that I could hope to gather up, I felt that I could not com-

plete the investment by sending a column to close the Kaffir Burr or southern gate of Magdala, but I deputed an officer of the Intelligence Department, Meer Akbar Ali, to "Mustiale," the Queen of the Woolla Gallas, to engage her to bring every man she could muster to close all escape on that side. Meer Akbar Ali's report will be forwarded, and will show how effectually he accomplished his mission. Reluctant as I was to incur any delay so near to Magdala, these considerations of the necessity of having supplies sufficient to carry me through the operations against that fortress obliged me to defer crossing the Bashilo for several days. I had not overlooked the probability of the unstable Abyssinian people despising the small postal detachments and the pacific demeanour of our troops; but the various difficulties of our transport, and scarcity of our supplies, kept me without sufficient troops to make posts of communication as strong as the circumstances required. Each day, however, was bringing forward some accession of strength, and, in the meantime, I had endeavoured by liberality and every means of conciliation to engage the petty chiefs between Antalo and the Tacassie River to maintain their friendly assistance in forwarding native convoys for supplies. It was the only course that gave chance of success; unfortunately it succeeded but partially. Relieved from the pressure of our main force, the chiefs commenced to interfere with the Abyssinian carriers of our supplies, and to make attacks on our posts and convoys of the local carriage, which had enabled me to advance from Antalo, was suspended just at the time when its maintenance was most important. Thus it happened that on the 4th of April I had only a few days' supplies to depend upon. This force had left all its baggage at Lat, 100 miles in rear, taking on merely the clothes in which they marched, and carrying great coats, blankets, and waterproof sheets; they had no other encumbrance than a bell tent for twelve officers or twenty soldiers; the daily storms which we experienced rendered this shelter indispensable; the carriage so released was sent back for provisions to the points where native transport was doubtful, and gave me some hope of ultimate relief from my commissariat difficulties, but the immediate urgency was pressing. On the 2nd instant I deputed Brigadier-General Merewether to the Tacassie to arrange with the chiefs there to bring in supplies of flour. Major Grant was directed to return to Lat, and Captain Moore to Lake Ashangie, to remove obstructions which had arisen at those places. Captain Speedy and Mr. Munzinger proceeded, the former to Daount, the latter to the

borders of Dalanta that had been ravaged by Theodore, and, through the exertions of these officers, I was enabled to feed my cattle and to obtain flour enough for eleven days' supply at 8oz. for each soldier. The native followers received wheat in the grain instead of flour.

Relying on the admirable spirit of my force, I was prepared to commit myself against Magdala with these means. Besides the view which I had obtained of Magdala and its approaches, I received most valuable information from a chief named "Beitwuddun Hailo," who had recently deserted from Magdala. Having engaged in some intrigues with Menelek, King of Shoa, he knew well that his lot would be instant death on his master's arrival. It is difficult to give, by description alone, a sufficient idea of the formidable position which we were about to assail.

The fortress of Magdala is about twelve miles from the right bank of the Bashilo, but the great altitude and the purity of the atmosphere exhibited the whole outline distinctly. The centre of the position is the rock of Selassie, elevated more than 9,000 feet above the sea, and standing on a plateau called Islamgie, which is divided into several extensive terraces, with perpendicular scraps of basalt; a saddle connects these terraces with the hill called Fahla. Fahla is a gigantic natural bastion, level on the top, entirely open, and commanded by Islamgie. It domineers completely, at an elevation of 1,200 feet, over all approaches to Islamgie; the sides appeared precipitous, and the summit, surrounded by a natural scrap of rock, accessible only in a few places and from 18 to 20 feet in height. Nearly concealed from view by Selassie and Fahla, the top of Magdala was partially visible. The road to Magdala winds up the steep side of Fahla, subject to its fire, and to the descent of rocks and stones. One part of the road is so steep that few horses, except those bred in the country, could carry their riders up or down it. The whole road is flanked by the end of Selassie and the broad side scrap of Islamgie. Altogether, without taking into account Magdala itself, the formidable character of its out-works exceeded anything which we could possibly have anticipated from the faint description of the position which had reached us. The refugee chief, Beitwuddun Hailo, was very anxious that I should try the south side, at the Kaffir Burr (gate), from the opposite range called Janta, saying "If you want to take Selassie go from hence; but if you want Magdala you must go from Janta." This, however, would have been impossible. I had not force enough to

divide, and I could not place this vast combination of natural fortresses between me and my direct line of communication. I also perceived that the real point to be taken was not Magdala but Islamgie, where Theodore had taken post with all his guns, and that Fahla was the key to the whole. On the 7th I descended to the bed of the Bashilo and reconnoitred the crossing. The ordinary approach to Magdala is by the Arogie ravine, which commences under Islamgie, and is bounded on its right by a spur which extends from Islamgie, in a serrated ridge, to the Bashilo. A similar spur from Fahla stretches to the water of the Bashilo, and bounds the ravine on its left. The highest point of this ridge is about 2,000 feet above the bed of the Arogie ravine. The grand features of the ground rendered it impossible for me, with my small force of infantry, to hold both sides of the ravine. I considered Fahla the key of the position, and determined to occupy the ridge, bearing in different parts the names of Gimborgi and Affijo, which leads to that imposing outwork. Established on this ridge, I could operate on either side of Fahla, as might seem expedient on closer examination.

Between the 4th and 9th inst. my force was increased by six companies of the 45th Regiment, under Lieut.-Colonel Parish, which, though long delayed for want of carriage, had marched from Zoulla in twenty-five days. A wing of the 3rd Bombay N.I., under Lieut.-Colonel Campbell, was detained seven marches in rear, owing to the urgent want of carriage, and I thus lost the services of an able officer and an excellent body of soldiers on whom I had calculated for the attack. On the 9th the whole force concentrated on the edge of the plateau overlooking the Bashilo, which flows 3,900 feet below it. Major Chamberlain, with the 23rd Punjaub Pioneers, supported by a wing of the Beloochees, occupied the bed of the Bashilo, and repaired Theodore's road. The signallers of the 10th Company Royal Engineers maintained communications. The Royal Engineers and the Madras and Bombay Sappers, under Captain Goodfellow, made up the necessary provision of sand bags, scaling ladders, and bags filled with powder for the demolition of gates, stockades, &c. As the only supply of water between the Bashilo and Magdala was under the enemy's fire, all the water-carriers of the force were organised under command of Captain Bainbridge, transport corps, with two subalterns, and Lieutenant Ramsbottom, transport corps, for the purpose of carrying forward regular supplies from the Bashilo. The bandsmen

and a party of Punjaub muleteers were also organised under command of Captain Griffith, aided by Lieutenant Gaselee, transport corps, and furnished with stretchers for the removal of wounded men from the field. All preparations having been completed, I placed the cavalry under Colonel Graves, to hold the Bashilo, but ready to advance, and moved the remainder of the force across the river under the immediate command of Sir C. Staveley. The second Brigade, under Brigadier-General Wilby, to remain in the bed of the Bashilo in support, the first Brigade under General Schneider to occupy the Gunborogi Spur, and advance to a suitable place for encampment, and also to cover a reconnaissance by the Deputy Quartermaster-General of the enemy's position. The Deputy Quartermaster-General reported that the ascent to Gumborgi was extremely steep and difficult, and that the King's road up the Arogie Ravine was easy and secure for the mountain guns and baggage; they were therefore ordered to take that route. When the leading part of the column had reached Affigo, I arrived at the front. The King's road emerges from the Arogie Pass at a distance of 1,200 yards from Affigo, and 700 feet below it. I ordered Major Chamberlain's Punjaub Pioneers to be sent immediately to cover the head of the pass, and the remainder of the brigade to be closed up as soon as possible. The men were greatly distressed by the heat, the severe ascent, and want of water. Shortly after Major Chamberlain had taken up his position, the Naval Rocket Brigade, under Captain Fellowes, appeared rising from the pass, followed by Lieut.-Colonel Penn's Steel Battery escorted by detachments of infantry. At this time the enemy opened his guns from Fahla and Islamgie, making good practice at the Punjaubees and at the position of Affigo. Notwithstanding the distance, which was more than 3,000 yards, the enemy's shot ranged well into the positions, owing to the great command, and probably to excessive charge of powder, but the fire being a plunging one, no casualties ensued. Almost simultaneously with the opening of the enemy's artillery, a large force was seen pouring down from Islamgie and the sides of Fahla, descending at speed the steep road and the faces of the mountains until they filled the whole plain of Arogie. Many of the enemy were dressed in red, and almost bore the appearance of our own troops in the distance. About 500, principally chiefs, were mounted. The Naval Brigade hastened up to Affigo, and as each rocket tube came into position it opened on the advancing masses of the enemy, who were startled, checked, and driven back

at some points, but only to press forward at others. I directed Sir Charles Staveley to bring forward the remaining infantry, which by this time had closed up, to repel the attack. The 4th (King's Own) Regiment, under Colonel Cameron, closely followed by Beville's Beloochees and the Royal Engineers, commanded by Major Pritchard, and the Bombay Sappers, under Captain MacDonnell, R.E., descended rapidly the steep path leading down to the Arogie Plain with unrestrained expressions of delight in having at last their enemy before them. Opening into skirmishing order, they ascended a small slope which separated them from the plain of Arogie, and immediately came in contact with the enemy, drove them back in spite of the efforts of their leaders, in masses on which the fire of the Snider told with terrible effect. Several gallant attempts were made by the Abyssinians to rally, but many of their chiefs fell, and they were driven down the slopes of Arogie towards the ravines on our left front. A portion of them withdrew up the sides of Fahla, and taking cover in a thicket of cactus trees, opened a teasing fire on Staveley's right, causing some casualties. Captain Fellowes having maintained the fire of his rockets until masked by the advance of the infantry, had been sent to support Sir Charles Staveley. The fire of the rockets, together with some volleys from Beville's Beloochees and the Royal Engineers, supported by two of Penn's guns under Lieutenant Taylor, cleared Staveley's flank from further annoyance. The rockets were then turned on the summit of Fahla. They were well directed, and, as I subsequently learned, produced a very great effect. A party of the enemy attempted to pass round the sides of Affigo, to turn our right, but were checked by a few rockets, and dispersed by the K Company, Madras Sappers, under Major Prendergast, V.C., Lieutenant Colonel Loch, with a detachment of the 3rd Bombay Cavalry, accompanied the infantry in support. Towards the left Colonel Milward ascended from the Arogie Pass with Penn's Battery escorted by detachments of the 4th (King's Own) Regiment, under Captain Kittoe, and the 23rd Pioneers under Captain Paterson, at the time when the guns opened from Fahla and Islamgie.

On perceiving the troops of Theodore descending from Islamgie, Colonel Milward took up a strong position and opened fire from Penn's Battery. Major Chamberlain, who was holding the Pioneers in hand to cover the head of the pass, moved to his left and joined Colonel Milward. A considerable body of Abyssinians bore

down upon Milward's position. Notwithstanding the evident effect of Penn's guns they continued to advance with much determination and order. Chamberlain with his Pioneers met this attack in most prompt and spirited manner, driving them with great slaughter into the ravines to his left front not, however, without gallant resistance on the part of the Abyssinians; who closed fearlessly with the Punjaubees; the spear wounds received bear witness to the closeness of the conflict. On the extreme left, the enemy pressed in large numbers towards the head of the Arogie ravine, where the baggage had arrived. The baggage master, Lieutenant Sweeny, 4th (K. O.) Regiment, with great readiness, massed the baggage in a safe position, and the baggage guard, consisting of two companies of the 4th (K. O.) Regiment and one of the 10th N.I., under Captain Roberts, of the former corps, until disabled, and subsequently under Lieutenants Abadie (11th Hussars) and Sweeny, were brought forward, and most effectually checked the attempt of the enemy to penetrate into the Arogie ravine. Arrested at the head of the ravine, and driven back by the baggage guards, closed in upon by Chamberlain's Pioneers and two companies of the 4th (K. O.) Regiment whom Sir C. Staveley had wheeled on to their flank; the enemy suffered most severely. Large numbers were seen to fall from the admirably directed fire of the mountain guns. Theodore's troops had advanced with the full confidence of men accustomed to victory; they had cast themselves off from their vantage ground to which there was no return. They had been promised by Theodore that they should be enriched by the spoils of the English, and it was not without a stout resistance that they were finally driven off the field. A heavy rain continued during the greater part of the action. The troops, thoroughly wet and tired, but highly elated with their victory, bivouacked for the night, covering the road to Arogie Pass, and before daylight had re-occupied their commanding position on Affigo, from which they had descended to meet the enemy. The wounded were promptly attended to, under the direction of Dr. Currie, C.B., Inspector-General of Hospitals. Many wounded Abyssinians were also carried off the field by our troops, and were carefully attended to in our hospital. The 2nd Brigade, which came up in the night, occupied the ground which had been held after the action by the 1st Brigade. According to the best information the probable number of the enemy was not less than 5,000, of whom at least 3,000 were the regular musketeers and the remainder less efficient-

ly armed. Theodore distributed new arms to the troops on the day preceding the battle. The loss of the enemy cannot be correctly estimated, 349 dead were buried in front of the left of our position alone, and exclusive of those who fell in Staveley's first attack; thirty very badly wounded Abyssinians were carried to our hospital. Theodore's Lieutenant, Fetararee Gabsie, and many chiefs of note were amongst the slain. Nearly all night the calls of the Abyssinians to their wounded friends were heard, and the greater number of the latter were carried from the field. We saw a large number of wounded when Theodore's army surrendered. The British loss was only twenty wounded, two mortally; this disparity of loss resulted from the determined and persistent attack of the Abyssinians against a better disciplined and better armed force—not better armed, however, as regarded the 23rd Pioneers, whose smooth bore is hardly equal to the double-barrelled percussion gun of the Abyssinians. There was no hasty flight. The enemy returned again and again to the attack, wherever the ground favoured them. I issued orders to provide against the pursuit being carried too far up the hill, which could only have ended by our retiring and giving renewed confidence to the enemy. On the morning of the 11th Lieutenant Prideaux and Mr. Flad arrived in my camp, accompanied by Dejach Alema, a son-in-law and confidential chief of Theodore, with a request for peace. I replied that if Theodore would bring all the European captives to my camp, and submit to the Queen of England, I would promise honourable treatment for himself and his family. Lieutenant Prideaux returned to Magdala with the letter containing these terms. In the course of the forenoon he returned again to the British camp with Mr. Flad, but without Dejach Alema. He brought a letter without seal or signature from Theodore, refusing my terms. My letter was returned. I sent back Lieutenant Prideaux and Mr. Flad to intimate that no other terms would be granted. I considered that a fuller atonement than the surrender of the captives, when they could be retained no longer, was absolutely required, and must be exacted; and painful as was the thought of the possible consequences to the captives if Theodore's rage should become excited, I relied for their safety on the apprehension of a renewal of the conflict, which demoralised Theodore's troops, and from which Theodore himself was not free, as he was involuntarily betrayed by Dejach Alema. I relied also on my threat, which I impressed on Dejach Alema, of unrelenting pursuit and punishment of all who might in any way

be concerned in the ill-treatment of the European captives. I pointed out how the power of Great Britain had already reached Magdala; that no corner of Abyssinia, however remote, could screen any one whom we wished to punish. Lieutenant Prideaux was met on his return to Magdala by Mr. Rassam, and the remainder of the British prisoners and several of those of other nations, all of whom arrived in my camp before evening. My further conditions were not complied with. At the request of Dejach Alema, I had promised to abstain from hostilities for twenty-four hours. After the lapse of forty-eight hours Theodore had not surrendered himself. Reliable information reached me that his army was recovering from their defeat, that many soldiers who had been unable to return to Magdala on the night of the 10th had since rejoined their ranks, that fresh defensive arrangements were being made, and that Theodore and his chiefs even contemplated a night attack on the second brigade, encamped on the lower ground. I therefore prepared to attack the enemy's position. I had originally intended first to assault Fahla from the side which fronted our camp, and was screened from the fire of Islamgie and Selassie. But under the altered condition of the enemy, Theodore having by death, wounds, and desertion lost half of his army and his bravest chiefs, I determined to attack Islamgie by the King's road. All arrangements for this had been considered, and the positions for the artillery reconnoitred and fixed upon, when information was brought to me that Theodore had left Magdala, and that many of the chiefs, with their followers, wished to surrender. I agreed to accept their submission, and ordered Sir Charles Staveley to advance on Islamgie, relaxing no precautions that I had considered necessary for the attack.

The scarcity of water rendered it impossible to retain any considerable body of cavalry before Magdala; my personal escort, under a native officer, only remained, and with a few details of other corps, was sent under command of Lieutenant Scott, A.D.C., to watch the west side of Magdala, where they took up a good position, until the arrival of the cavalry, under Colonel Graves, who completed the investment up to the Kaffir Burr Gate, which was watched by the Gallas. The Bashilo was held by the Head-quarter Detachment of the Scinde Horse, under Major Briggs, and detachments of the 3rd Dragoon Guards, 3rd and 12th Cavalry, under Major Miller, to secure that point and provide against the escape of the enemy in that direction by the Minjerra

ravine. A detachment of the Beloochees under Lieutenant Beville ascended by the spurs of Fahla, and occupied that important position, where they were reinforced from the 2nd Brigade by the Head-quarters Wing of the 10th N. I., under Colonel Field. The artillery was placed in position, and the troops advanced, preceded by Captain Speedy, of the Intelligence Department, with a small escort of the 3rd Light Cavalry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Loch, to communicate with the chiefs who wished to surrender, and to prevent any misunderstanding. No resistance was offered. Sir Charles Staveley effected an entrance to Islamgie and Selassie through a difficult crevice in the rocky scraps. It would be impossible to arrive at any correct estimate either of the number of armed men who laid down their weapons, or of the masses of people—men, women, and children—whom we found on Islamgie. It was necessary to collect and guard the arms that were surrendered. It was also necessary to send down all the disarmed soldiers, and the miscellaneous multitude that followed them to the plain below, before I could proceed actively against Magdala. Theodore himself, having abandoned his attempt to escape, was making preparations for defence and offering us defiance in front of Magdala. By three o'clock, the Abyssinians having nearly all cleared away from Islamgie, I ordered the attack on Magdala to be at once carried out. The entrance of Magdala is 300 feet above the terreplain of Islamgie, and the ascent is by an extremely steep and rugged path. Viewing the very difficult nature of the approach I made the attack as strong as possible, and massed the whole of my artillery fire to cover it, in order to overpower the enemy's resistance, and prevent the heavy casualties which I should otherwise have incurred. The assaulting force consisted of the 2nd Brigade, led by the 33rd (Duke of Wellington's) Regiments, accompanied by detachments of the Royal Engineers and Madras and Bombay Sappers and Miners, to clear away obstacles. The first brigade to be a close support. I concentrated the fire of the artillery on the gateway and the north end of the fort, which were crowded with the houses of the soldiers, avoiding, as much as possible, the higher part of the interior, occupied by the Abyssinian prisoners and non-combatants. The enemy carefully concealed themselves from view, so that the place seemed almost deserted, though, when entered by our troops, it was found to be thronged with soldiers who had thrown away their arms, released prisoners, and the numerous voluntary and involuntary followers

of Theodore's fortunes. The artificial defences consisted of stone walls, loophooled and surmounted by strong and thick barricades of thorny stakes with narrow stone gate ways; the lower one built upon the interior, the higher one being 70 feet above the lower, and approached by a very steep, narrow path winding amongst the soldiers' huts.

The attack was ably conducted by Sir Charles Staveley, whose report is annexed, and gallantly carried out by the troops. Fortunately the defences were very unscientifically constructed, and though the attack was met by a short fire from the enemy, yet they could not direct it on the head of the storming party without exposing themselves to the rapid and fatal fire of the Snider rifle, and our loss was, in consequence, very small. The Royal Engineers and Sappers, and leading sections of the 33rd Regiment, were long before they could force an entrance, and during this time nine officers and men received wounds or contusions. At length an entrance was found by means of the ladders near the gate, and by the leading men of the 33rd, who scaled a rock and turned the defences of the gateway. The enemy were driven to the second barricade, and when that was carried all resistance ceased. Amongst the dead near the outer gateway were found several of Theodore's most devoted chiefs—one of them, Dejach Enjeda, had urged Theodore to murder all the captives, a course from which he was dissuaded by others. Close to the second gateway lay the body of Theodore. At the moment when the barricade was forced by the 33rd, Theodore fell, as I have since learned, by his own hands. His troops immediately fled—some by the Kaffir Burr Gate, which we found choked with arms that had been cast away in their flight. Of these fugitives, the greater part fell into the hands of the Gallas, and the remainder, seeing the fate of their comrades, and hearing the taunting invitations of the Gallas, returned to Magdala and surrendered.

The command of Magdala was entrusted to Brigadier-General Wilby, who held it with the 33rd and wing of the 45th Regiments. So thickly was the fortress inhabited, and so great was the crowd of people that it was no easy matter to establish order. Guards were placed at the gates and such places as required protection. The family of Theodore were committed to the care of Mr. Rassam, who was requested to do all it was in his power for their comfort and protection. The Abyssinian prisoners were released from their chains, and the numerous body of Abyssinians, whose histories and

condition it was impossible at the time to investigate, were collected in an open space in the centre of the fortress, where they could be protected, and where they quickly threw up huts for themselves, and remained until their final departure. On the 15th the 4th (King's Own) Regiment relieved the 33rd in Magdala, and the 45th were moved to Islamgie to reinforce the detachment of the 10th N.I., under Colonel Field, for the protection of the captured arms and ordnances, and to furnish working parties of their destruction. The inhabitants of Magdala were collected at Arajie, where great vigilance was necessary to protect them from the Gallas, who were lying in wait both day and night for opportunities of plundering and destroying them.

Notwithstanding the friendly relations with the Queens of the Gallas their people were so little under restraint that it was frequently necessary to fire upon them to drive them from molesting our water parties and carrying off mules. A party of them in search of plunder even dared to make their way into Magdala, where they were captured by the guard of the 33rd Regiment. On the 15th and 16th the disarmed soldiers and people of Magdala made their exodus from Arajie. Every consideration was shown them, and they were allowed to take all their property. The Arajie defile was guarded by infantry, and their procession after crossing the Bashilo was guarded by cavalry patrols until they reached Waddela. No doubt many of these people deserved little mercy at the hands of the peasants of Dalanta, who had suffered so much misery from Theodore's troops ; but having surrendered to the British forces, it was incumbent on us to protect them until they reached a point of safety from whence they could go to their native districts. On the morning of the 17th orders were issued to clear every one out of Magdala by four p.m. At that hour the whole of the captured ordnance having been destroyed, the gates of Magdala were blown up, and the whole of the buildings were committed to the flames. The wounded Abyssinians, who had no friends to take charge of them, were conveyed to our hospitals. The elephants and heavier ordnance having been sent in advance on the 15th, on the 18th of April the force recrossed the Bashilo on its return to the coast. I have the honour to enclose plans and photographs to illustrate the course of the operations. I regret that I have not been able to complete my despatch earlier, but owing to the marching in a difficult country, which has occupied the greater part of the days, and the many demands on my time,

it has been quite out of my power. By the next mail I hope to submit the conclusion of my despatch, which will include the re-embarkation of the greater part of the forces, and I shall then have the satisfaction to represent for the favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government the services of the officers and men of the force which I have had the honour to command, of which it is impossible for me to write in too high terms, and to which I could not now do adequate justice.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

R. NAPIER, *Lieutenant-General,*
Commander-in-Chief.

Nominal Roll of Officers and Men wounded at the capture of Magdala, on the 13th April 1868.

Royal Engineers.—Major Gordon Pritchard, two slight wounds, by splinters from stones, in right shoulder, with considerable contusions ; Lance-Corporal W. Hobson, No. 5,957, slight splintered wound of right leg ; Sapper H. Dawes, No. 3,470, slight splintered wound of forehead.

H. M.'s 33rd Regiment.—Sergeant E. Jones, gunshot wound through right calf, severely ; Private Stephen Lake, gunshot wound through right leg, severely ; Private T. Hague, spearwound over frontal bone, slight ; Private P. Daley, gunshot wound in left hand, slight ; Private Hickson, gunshot wound of knee, slight.

3rd Light Cavalry.—Sawar Kamja Khan, gunshot wound in right forearm, severely.

Madras S. Muleteers.—Hamildar Koandra Suamee, gunshot wound in left elbow joint, severely.

The following officers and non-commissioned officers were hurt from the gateway, but were not returned as wounded :—Captain Elliott, Madras Sappers ; Cornet Dalrymple, 19th Hussars, attached to Madras Sappers ; Sergeant Fielding, Madras Sappers ; Sergeant Deains, 10th Company Royal Engineers ; Sergeant Morgan, 10th Company Royal Engineers.

Nominal Roll of Men wounded in the action before Magdala, on the 10th April 1868.

Captain E. Roberts, 4th King's Own, dangerously, gunshot wound of left elbow joint ; S. M. I. Michael Creedon, 4th King's Own,

dangerously, gunshot wound of left leg ; Private George Kirby, 4th King's Own, dangerously, gunshot wound of left humerus ; Lance-Corporal Richard Ordwell, 4th King's Own, severely, gunshot wound of left foot ; Private George Simfell, 4th King's Own, slightly, gunshot wound of right hand ; Private Michael Unica, 4th K. O., slightly ditto ; Lance-Corporal Hugh Evans, 4th K. O., slightly, splinter wound of left eye. Private Deal Sing, 23rd P. N. I., dangerously, gunshot wound of left femur ; Private Basa Khan, Pioneer, severely, spearwound of neck ; Private Ran Sing, Pioneer, severely, gunshot wound of sacrum ; Private Utter Sing, Pioneer, dangerously, gunshot wound of left femur ; Private Jewel Sing, Pioneer, severely, gunshot wound of face ; Bugler Khosal Sing, Pioneer, severely, gunshot wound of right hand ; Private Jeetor Sing, severely, gunshot wound of right thigh ; Private Simoop Sing, Pioneer, slightly, contusion of abdomen from a bullet, Private Geooroom Sing, Pioneer, slightly, gunshot wound of left foot ; Private Heera Sing, Pioneer, slightly, spearwound of hand ; Private Gewan Sing, Pioneer, ditto ; Private Jowala Sing, Pioneer, spearwound of thumb ; C. H. Sumboo, Bombay Sappers and Miners, slightly, lost two teeth, upper lip divided by a musket ball.

Return of Ordnance captured in the Magdala Fortress on the 13th April 1868.

Three brass 56-pounder 5-in. smooth bore, one brass 18-pounder ditto, four brass 6-pounder ditto, four brass 6-pounder ditto (Turkish), two brass 6-pounder ditto (English, cast at Cossipore), one brass 6 pounder ditto (French), five brass 24-pounder howitzers (Native and French), three brass 12-pounder ditto, one brass 3-pounder, four iron 1-pounder howitzers.

Appended to the despatch of Sir Robert Napier is Sir Charles Staveley's report to the Commander-in-Chief, narrating the capture of Magdala. It goes over the incidents already recorded by Sir Robert, and ends with a list of names of officers brought under the notice of His Excellency.

I wish to bring the names of the following officers to the notice of His Excellency :—Brigadier-General Wilby who commanded the 2nd Brigade and led the assault. He mentions the very effective service rendered him by Captain Hicks, his Brigade Major ;

Captain James, Deputy Assistant Major General ; and Captain Capel, 12th Bengal Cavalry, A.D.C. ; Major Pritchard, R.E., (who was wounded), the senior officer with the Royal Engineers and Sappers, and who mentions the able assistance he received from Captain Elliott, commanding K Company Madras Sappers. Captain Foord, Lieutenant Bird, Cornet Dalrymple, and Surgeon Pearl, of the Madras Sappers, Sergeants Harrold and Dean, R.E., Corporal M'Donagh, and Sapper Bailey ; Major Cooper, commanding 33rd Regiment, who led his regiment to and over the gate ; and I beg here to bring especially to notice No. 3,691, Drummer Michael Magner, and No. 949, Private James Bergin, 33rd Regiment, the two men who first forced an entrance to the extreme and turned the gate, Captain Elliott, who commanded the Madras Sappers ; Captain M'Donnell, commanding Bombay Sappers ; Lieutenant-Colonel Parish, commanding 45th Regiment ; Colonel Field, commanding 10th Regiment Native Infantry ; Brigadier-General Schneider, commanding 1st Brigade ; Lieutenant-Colonel Cameron, commanding 4th (King's Own) Royal Regiment ; Major Beville, commanding Wing Belooch Regiment ; Major Chamberlain, commanding 23rd Punjaub Pioneers ; Brigadier-General Petrie, commanding Royal Artillery ; Lieutenant-Colonel Wallace, commanding Division Royal Artillery ; Lieutenant-Colonel Milward, commanding Division Royal Artillery ; Lieutenant-Colonel Penn commanding A-21, Royal Artillery. Commander Fellows, commanding Naval Rocket Batteries ; Captain Twiss, commanding B-21 Royal Artillery ; Colonel Graves, 3rd Brigade Light Cavalry, commanding Cavalry Brigade ; Lieutenant-Colonel Tower, commanding 3rd Dragoon Guards ; Major Gough, V.C., commanding 12th Bengal Cavalry ; Major Briggs, commanding Sind Horse ; Lieutenant Colonel Loch, commanding Details of Cavalry ; Captain Moore, commanding 3rd Brigade Light Cavalry ; Lieutenant W. Scott, A.D.C., commanding the Commander-in-Chief's escort. Lieutenant A. LeMessurier, Royal Engineers ; Captain Leslie, and Lieutenant Leacock, Bombay Sappers ; Captain Bainbridge, commanding Land Transport Corps, who had the very difficult duty of providing water for the troops throughout the operations since leaving the Bashil river. Captains Ross and Griffiths and Twentyman, 20th Hussars, commanding Divisions Land Transport Corps ; Major Mignon, Assistant Commissary-General 1st Division, whose difficulties are well known to the Commander-in-Chief ; Major Bardin, Assistant Commissary-General, 1st Brigade, and Major Goldsworthy, Brigade

Major of Cavalry, acting as Assistant Commissary-General 2nd Brigade; Dr. Mahaffy, Principal Medical Officer 1st Division, whose arrangements for the field hospitals were all that could be desired; Surgeon-Major Wyllie, in charge of the Field Hospitals 2nd Brigade.

I desire also to bring to notice the officers of my staff:—Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, Assistant Adjutant General; Major Baigrie, Assistant Quartermaster-General; Lieutenant Saunders, 20th Hussars, Aide-de-Camp; and Captain George Arbuthnot, extra Aide-de-Camp.

These officers rendered me great assistance in carrying out the orders of His Excellency the Commander in-Chief during the day, and have served with me since my arrival at Zoulla, with the first arrived brigade.

(Lieutenant-General Sir R. NAPIER, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., to the SECRETARY OF STATE for India).

Commander-in-Chief's Office, Camp Koomeylee,
June 1, 1868.

RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,

In continuation of my Despatch, No. 40, dated 12th May, I have the honour to report that I this day passed the Sooroo defile with the last column of the Abyssinian Expeditionary Force, the 25th Bombay Native Light Infantry and the 27th Belooch Battalion.

The march from Dalanta to Antalo was trying, from the frequent severe storms of rain which appeared to accompany us, and from which our troops, in some degree, and more specially the followers and transport animals could not fail to suffer.

The wild border tribes of Abyssinians and Gallas, through whom our route lay, from the Taccassi to Antalo, being very little under the control of their distant and almost nominal rulers, and were perfectly well behaved on our advance, finding by degrees our vulnerable points, had been for some time making attacks upon our muleteers and camp followers, when venturing far from their escorts, and on some occasions even on our armed soldiers.

In the first instance some camp followers were killed, and in the last our soldiers being driven to use their weapons, several Abyssinians and Gallas were killed and wounded.

Considerable numbers of armed men, principally Gallas, watched our march from the hills, and though restrained by the pressure of our columns, they made attempts on our line of baggage, but met

with little success; soldiers were freely interspersed along the line, and the rear guard from Marowa to Antalo was continuously under the command of an experienced officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Bray, of the 4th (King's Own) Regiment, until we reached the coast.

This was a very clear indication of what a force returning in difficulties would experience.

In the friendly territory of Prince Kassai the troops returned to marches made easy by the improved roads and the increased supplies of articles of food, turned into great luxuries by a period of privation, which were stored in the fortified forts of Antalo and Addigerat.

All local information led me to believe that there would be no danger of floods before the middle of June, but owing to the extraordinary severity of the spring rains, a succession of floods during the early part of May did much damage to the Sooroo defile road.

On the 19th of May, with hardly any warning, a heavy flood, coming from a lateral tributary which enters above Sooroo, filled the Sooroo defile channel so suddenly, that seven camp followers and some cattle, not being instantly removed from the waterway, were swept away and perished.

On the 30th January full precautionary instructions were issued to secure the safety of the troops in the Pass, and I had no apprehension on their account. The losses of the 19th arose from avoidable causes, and were not likely to recur.

In case we might be detained during the rainy season, an alternative line, turning the Sooroo defile, had been surveyed by Lieutenant Dr. Thoren, 45th Regiment, Quartermaster-General's Department, by which a safer though less even path might have been opened.

By the exertions of the Garrison of Sooroo, directed by Captain Chrystie, Royal Engineers, the damage to the road in the Pass was rapidly repaired after each flood.

The severe weather in the high mountains, with the reaction after excitement and the scanty food, naturally increased the sick lists, but there are few bad cases.

The wounded are rapidly recovering, and although the total number of sick ultimately amounted to two hundred and sixty, no member of the force, however humble, has failed to obtain transport when required.

The whole force have returned in safety to the coast, and the greater part have already re-embarked.

It is now my duty to lay before Her Majesty's Government a statement of the services of the troops under my command and of the General Departmental and Personal Staff.

Those who first claim notice are the Pioneer Force, who landed in Zoulla in October last, and consisted of Major Marett's Mountain Battery (Native), the 3rd and 4th companies of Bombay Sappers and Miners under Captain Leslie and Leacock, the 3rd Bombay Light Cavalry, commanded by Colonel Graves, and the 10th Native Infantry, under Colonel Field, who commanded the whole.

The labours were not commenced under very encouraging circumstances; a barren shore, so shelving that the troops had to wade several hundred yards daily in landing stores; a supply of water so scanty that it disappeared immediately, and a temperature so sultry that any exertion was oppressive, but the spirit of the troops never flagged, encamping grounds were cleared, twenty miles of road were made from the coast to Koomeylee and towards Sooroo, a depôt was established at Senafe, and huts erected for the muleteers.

Lieutenant Beck's Company of the Marine Battalion was the first party of Infantry in Abyssinia, amongst the earliest labourers in the Sooroo defile, and throughout the campaign performed most valuable service as Pioneers, in sinking wells, and opening and maintaining the road to Senafe.

The left wing of the 10th garrisoned Senafe, and had a large share in the works which make the depôt a model of neatness and of convenience in its water supply.

The right wing of the 10th formed part of the advanced pioneer column, and shared in all its labours; after five months of work it had an unwilling rest at Antalo, and was soon again in the front and at the capture of Magdala.

The next arrivals in the country were Murray's Armstrong Battery, the 33rd Regiment, under Colonel Dunn, V.C., and Beville's Belooch Battalion.

Captain Murray, during a long detention of his battery at Koomeylee, sought occupation for his men in every way that could aid our progress. It mattered little whether they cleared the obstructions in seven miles of road, carried water for six miles to support a working party, moved stores for the Commissariat, broke in mules to harness or fitted them with pack saddles; everything was done with the same ability and zeal that has carried the battery over eight hundred miles of mountains in efficient condition.

The 33rd Regiment furnished a detachment of two companies to Koomeylee, for sinking wells. They were the first British Infantry in Abyssinia ; they furnished heavy fatigue parties for all the works at Zoulla. In the absence of a sufficient number of the Land Transport Corps the men converted themselves into extemporary muleteers, and recaught and saved large numbers of mules, which would otherwise have perished. They then proceeded to Senafe.

The Belooch Regiment went to Koomeylee, where Major Beville with the right wing joined Sturt's Bombay Sappers in making the admirable road in the Sooroo defile. Major Hogg, with the left wing, made the scarcely less difficult one at Rarry Guddie. The Beloochees then garrisoned Addigerat, and raised much of the intrenchments there. The right wing partook of all the labours of the advance, and was present at Arogie and Magdala. The left wing, long delayed for carriage, at length pressed to the front, and, by hard marching, was present at Magdala on the 13th April.

The 10th Company Royal Engineers, under Major Pritchard, composed of a body of highly instructed and valuable soldiers, arrived from England, and was amongst the first to land at Zoulla.

The well sinkers, directed by Lieutenant LeMesurier, the signallers under Lieutenant Morgan, and the telegraphers and photographers have rendered excellent service throughout the campaign. The head-quarters of the 10th Company has always accompanied the leading column in the advance.

The 4th King's Own Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Cameron, with the 3rd and 25th Bombay Native Infantry, under Lieutenant-Colonels Campbell and Little, on arrival at Zoulla, were immediately put to work upon the railway, on landing water and stores for the force, and on the embankments to protect the Commissariat stores which were liable to be inundated at spring tides ; all these were heavy labours which left no soldier unemployed.

Nothing could exceed the spirit with which these regiments worked in order to hasten the advance. The work on the foreshore fell chiefly on the native troops. Little could the mud-bespattered labourer with his basket be recognised as the smart sepoy of the parade ground.

Major Chamberlain's pioneers, on arrival, at once took their place on the works, they brought the energy and the spirit of their race, together with their organization for skilled labour, to bear on every duty, and the works received an increased impetus.

At fifty feet below the surface they found sweet water, an

inestimable blessing to the Ishmaelites of Zoulla, who in their gratitude were ready to worship the Punjaubees. There is no part of the way which does not bear marks of the labour of this regiment, either on the roads or the telegraph.

The 33rd Regiment was never idle; at Senafe and Antalo every man was employed not only in making the roads and intrenchments, but in cutting and bringing in grass and wood for the Commissariat, and poles for the telegraph. When joined by the 4th King's Own Regiment they bore the first brunt of opening the way through the rocky mountains of Lasta to Magdala.

The A and B Batteries 21st Brigade Royal Artillery, under Lieutenant-Colonel Penn and Captain Twiss, took over the steel mountain guns on landing; they broke in mules, fitted their harness, and made extraordinary progress in the organization of these batteries, which maintained their thorough efficiency during the march to Magdala and back.

Whilst waiting for the time when they could advance, and when the provisioning of Senafe was of the first importance, these batteries carried up several convoys of stores and provisions to that post.

The 5th Battery 25th Brigade Royal Artillery (brass rifled mountain guns), under Major Bogle, arrived from Calcutta complete and efficient in every particular of equipment.

The circumstances of the campaign did not permit this battery, to join the advance troops; but while waiting at Zoulla before they advanced to Senafe, Major Bogle volunteered the services of his battery for every useful work. In carrying treasure and stores to Senafe, the battery marched nearly one thousand miles. It furnished a detachment, under Major Hills, V.C., which manned two 8-inch mortars, a valuable battery on elephants, which was carried to Magdala and employed in the attack on that fortress. In case of a protracted defence these mortars would have been invaluable.

Elephants have frequently been employed for the transport of artillery in Indian warfare, but it has been generally by means of draught; when guns have been carried it has only been for short distances.

It has been the privilege of this campaign to prove that elephants could carry Armstrong twelve-pounder guns and eight-inch mortars over steep mountains for many hundreds of miles.

There were forty-two elephants employed in the conveyance of ordnance and ammunition, and of these five have been lost from hard work and want of water during the operations before Magdala.

The Royal Naval Rocket Brigade, under Commander Fellowes, furnished chiefly by Her Majesty's ship "Octavia," broke in their own mules, quickly learned duties and a drill which were new to them, carried stores and provisions to Senafe, marched well, and were with the leading brigade in the advance on Magdala. They have added to the high reputation which the Royal Navy have ever held when serving with the army in the field.

The 45th Regiment, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Parish, arrived at Zoulla early in February, and remained there employed on the railway and other works until the 19th of March, when at length the obstacles to their advance being overcome, the head-quarters and six companies making most strenuous efforts to reach the front arrived at Dalanta in time to share in the operations against Magdala, after having marched 300 miles in twenty-four days, accomplishing the last 70 miles across the Wandach Pass, 10,500 feet high, and the Taccassi and Jeddah ravines in four days, a rate of marching in such a country hardly to be surpassed. Four companies being urgently required were detained at Koomeylee until late in March, when they were sent to garrison Addigerat and Antalo.

In addition to the severe mountain marches in which each soldier carried a heavy load, regiments often worked at the roads on the line of march, or immediately on arrival in camp. Not unfrequently every available man of a regiment has been on working parties or outlying picket.

The constant storms of rain and the cold nights of the high altitude were encountered cheerfully, on rations reduced to eight ounces of flour and meat only. An increase was made to the allowance of meat it is true, but that increase gave no compensation for the articles of rum, sugar, and compressed vegetables, which had to be left behind.

The 2nd Bombay Grenadiers and 18th Bombay Native Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonels Muter and Combe, and the 21st Bengal Native Infantry (Punjaubees,) by Major Thelwall, C. B., while longing for an order to advance, contributed most cheerfully their labours for many weeks to the railway, the roads through the Pass, the wells, the water supply, and the conservancy of the Pass.

Of the regiments of the 4th Brigade, which had been held in readiness in Bombay, the 26th Cameronians, under Lieutenant-Colonel Henning, alone landed, and were moved as quickly as possible to Senafe, but short as was the detention of this regiment at Zoulla it also contributed its labours to forward the work at our base.

The 5th and 8th Regiments Bombay Native Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonels Taylor and Sandwith, both regiments with a high reputation, returned to India on the fall of Magdala, without having landed in Abyssinia.

These three regiments were all wanted earlier, but were not sent for, because they could not have been moved to the highlands for want of food and transport.

Before the arrival of the Cameronians, when the connecting posts of our line had been numerically much weaker than I desired, I had obtained the services of 200 seamen and marines, under Captain Colin Campbell, from Her Majesty's ship "Octavia." They marched towards Senafe; but the arrival of the Cameronians rendered their proceeding onwards no longer necessary.

The cavalry service has been such as to call for the fullest powers of that arm as light cavalry.

The long line of communication required that the cavalry should be in many detachments.

They have had peculiar responsibility thrown upon their officers and soldiers. Left in isolated positions, far from control, entrusted with commissariat duties, while charged to be conciliatory to the people of the country, they have been firm in maintaining inviolate the respect due to their position as soldiers. The supplies for the troops marching to join the main force in advance frequently depended on the ability and trustworthiness of a non-commissioned officer of cavalry; and I have had repeated testimony to the efficiency with which these duties have been performed.

Seldom or never have cavalry had such a variety of duties in maintaining communications for so many miles, climbing over mountains and through forest ranges, often benighted, where a false step would be destruction, and in danger of treacherous attacks from the wild border tribes, who are honoured amongst themselves for slaying without reason and without scruple.

The wear and tear of horses in such duties have been very considerable. The men, however, have returned to their more regular duties with a discipline and efficiency unimpaired.

The wing of the 3rd Dragoon Guards was long detained in India, and arrived late in the campaign.

Notwithstanding the distance and the severity of the country through which they marched, Colonel Tower by judicious management brought both men and horses in the most efficient condition in time to share in the investment of Magdala.

The 3rd Bombay Cavalry and the 3rd Regiment Sind Horse, commanded by Major Briggs, having been the earliest in the field, have borne the hardest share of the duties, serving in their turn as parts of the pioneer force.

The rough training of the Sind Frontier Brigade, ever on outpost duty, rendered Major Briggs' Regiment admirably qualified for the duties which it was called upon to perform in Abyssinia.

The 12th and 10th Bengal Cavalry under Majors Gough, V. C., and Palliser, took up on the 18th of March, and the 1st of April, the chain of posts between Antalo and the Taccassi, and Major Gough brought up the head-quarter detachment of the 12th, reduced to ninety-six men, to share in the attack on Magdala.

Major Palliser, with the head-quarters of the 10th Cavalry, arrived at Antalo in most opportune time to preserve our communications, which were very seriously assailed; had the service been of longer duration the regiments of Bengal Cavalry would have added to the high opinions which their soldier-like performance of their duties and efficient equipment have called forth.

The Royal Engineers, directed by Lieutenant-Colonel St. Clair Wilkins, have rendered invaluable services during this expedition, which has given such an ample field for their employment.

Their energy and skill are shown in every work, from the first landing in Zoulla to Magdala, and require a special separate report.

The works of the Madras and Bombay Sappers and Miners, under Major Prendergast, V. C., Royal Engineers, and Captain MacDonnell, Royal Engineers, have been singularly valuable and important, and will be described in the report of the Engineer operations.

The very great services of the Commissariat Department, directed by Lieutenant Colonel Lucas, and of the Transport Corps, directed by Lieutenant-Colonel Warden, both under the control of Lieutenant Colonel Holland, of the Commissariat Department, have been rendered under many disadvantages, and require a separate report to do full justice to the officers and subordinates of their establishments.

The duties of the Medical Department, under the chief direction of Dr. Currie, C. B., Inspector-General, have been efficiently and satisfactorily performed.

The necessities of the campaign demanded that the equipment of the Medical, equally with those of every other department with the advanced troops, should be reduced to the lowest possible

scale, but with the very limited means at their disposal, Dr. Currie and the Deputy Inspectors-General Dr Pelly and Dr. Mahaffy, together with the Regimental and Staff Officers serving under them, performed their duties in a manner which has reflected great credit on that department of the Army.

The services of the Veterinary Department, under Staff Veterinary Surgeon Hallen, an able and valuable officer, have been of the highest importance.

A copy of Mr. Hallen's report on the working of this department is attached; Mr. Hallen makes special mention of the services of First Class Veterinary Surgeons Lamb and Anderson.

The Telegraph, directed by the intelligence and experience of Captain St. John, Royal Engineers, and by Lieutenant Puzey, Royal Engineers, was carried to Antalo under circumstances of great difficulty, and although the wire was often mischievously cut and communication interrupted, it was immediately restored. Errors were most rare; the telegraph worked well and rendered important service.

The Officers of the Trigonometrical Survey, Lieutenant Carter, Director, and Dummler and Holdich, Royal Engineers, Assistants, by the most strenuous exertions, and at the cost of great fatigue and privations, succeeded in surveying nearly 6,000 square miles, and carried their work from the Coast to Magdala.

The labour of these Officers, two of whom have been obliged to return to England from loss of health, will prove very valuable.

I am greatly indebted to Major-General Sir Charles Staveley K.C.B., who has afforded me the most valuable support and assistance throughout the campaign. He laid the first foundation of order at Zoulla, and when summoned to the front, ably commanded the First Division during the advance, in the action of Arogie, and at the capture of Magdala. As Second in Command he has possessed my fullest confidence.

Major-General Malcolm, C.B., commanded the Second Division, which held the line of country from Senafe to Antalo, and subsequently to Lake Ashangie.

It required great temper and judgment to maintain the good understanding which I had established with the Chiefs and people of the country.

General Malcolm did this, and by his vigilance and activity kept the communications in Tigre in good order, and restored order in the district of Ashangie.

His Excellency Sir Seymour Fitzgerald was so good as to grant my request for the services of Major-General Russell, who left his important office, Military and Political, as Resident of Aden, to command at Zoulla.

In the administration of that post, General Russell has entirely fulfilled my expectations and wishes.

I am greatly indebted to him for the excellent manner in which he has conducted the very important and trying duties of his command.

Brigadier-General Collings, an Officer of mature judgment and experience, conducted to my satisfaction the command at Antalo, a position of vital importance, both as affording support to the front and as the last point of connection with the friendly province of Tigre, the supplies of which were so valuable.

Brigadier-General Stewart commanded at Zoulla for some time, and on Major-General Russell's arrival, proceeded to Senafe; in both commands Brigadier General Stewart met with my approbation.

Brigadier General Wilby was usefully employed in the Koomeylee Pass, in the earlier stages of the expedition, when the difficulty in arranging the transport of supplies to Senafe was greatest.

In the attack on Magdala, General Wilby commanded the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Division which assaulted that formidable position.

Brigadier-General Schneider commanded the 1st Brigade of the 1st Division, which led during the advance on Magdala, was engaged at Arogie and in the assault on Magdala.

Both of these officers have met with my approbation in the exercise of their respective commands, and have been ever favourably recommended to my notice by Major-General Sir Charles Staveley.

Brigadier-General Petrie, commanding Royal Artillery, has afforded me every assistance. He was constantly present with the advanced troops, and directed the whole of the artillery at Magdala.

General Petrie mentions most favourably his Divisional Commanders, Lieutenant-Colonels Wallace and Milward, whose reports on their respective commands will be forwarded.

It was due very much to the care and judgment of Colonel Wallace that the elephants with the heavy batteries accomplished their unequalled march with so much success.

Lieutenant-Colonel Milward, whose merits I had learnt to appreciate in China, was permitted by His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief to join me for the special purpose of directing the Steel Mountain Batteries. The success of those weapons

has been fully established, and the rapidity and completeness with which they were organized is due to Colonel Milward's experienced direction.

General Petrie also mentions the Commanders of Batteries, Lieutenant-Colonel Penn, Captains Twiss and Murray, and Brevet-Major Hills, V.C., Majors Marett and Bogle, and particularly his Brigade-Major, Captain Geary, and his Aide-de-Camp, Lieutenant Chapman, of the Royal Artillery.

Colonel Graves, 3rd Cavalry, very efficiently commanded the whole of the cavalry on several occasions, including the operations before Magdala.

The 3rd Bombay Light Cavalry, very soon after its arrival in Abyssinia with the Pioneer Brigade, lost nearly one-half of its horses from the epidemic.

Immediate steps were taken to remount the regiment from Egypt and Bombay.

When the force advanced from Antalo, Colonel Graves' regiment was remounted, and, by the great care bestowed on the horses, their condition was preserved in a remarkable manner.

Colonel Graves deserves much credit for the efficiency which his regiment has maintained under these trying circumstances.

Lieutenant-Colonel St. Clair Wilkins, commanding Royal Engineers, arrived in Abyssinia with the reconnoitring party. His report of the operations conducted by the officers of the Royal Engineers will show how unremitting have been his labours, and how extremely valuable have been his services and those of the department under his orders.

Captain Goodfellow, next in seniority, whose services at Zoulla in constructing the Pier have already been noticed, was the Chief Engineer on the highlands, and displayed great intelligence and activity in every duty throughout the operations.

I desire to express my very high appreciation of the services of the Officers commanding the several corps of the Expeditionary Force, and of the Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Soldiers who have served under them during the campaign.

Lieutenant-Colonel Tower, commanding Wing 3rd Dragoon Guards, and Major Miller, who brought the wing from India in admirable order.

Major Briggs, commanding 3rd Regiment Sind Horse, and Majors Palliser and Gough, V. C., commanding 10th and 12th Regiments Bengal Cavalry, Lieutenant-Colonel Loch, 3rd Light Cavalry,

Lieutenant-Colonel Wallace, commanding Heavy Artillery, Lieut.-Colonel Milward, Mountain Rifled Batteries, Captain Murray, commanding G Battery 14th Brigade Royal Artillery, Lieutenant-Colonel Penn, commanding A Battery 21st Brigade Royal Artillery, Captain Twiss, commanding B Battery 21st Brigade Royal Artillery, Major Bogle, 5th Company 25th Brigade Royal Artillery, Major Marrett, Native Mountain Train, Major Hills, Elephant Mortar Battery, Commander Fellows, commanding Naval Rocket Brigade, Major Pritchard, commanding 10th Company Royal Engineers, Major Prendergast, V. C., Royal Engineers, Madras Sappers and Miners, Captain MacDonnell, Royal Engineers, Bombay Sappers and Miners.

Lieutenant-Colonel Cameron has won my admiration by the manner in which he has commanded his excellent regiment (the 4th King's Own), and the soldierlike spirit which, by his teaching and example, he has so well fostered and maintained.

Colonel Field, Major Chamberlain, and Major Beville, commanding those admirable Native Regiments, the 10th Bombay Native Infantry, the 23rd Pioneers, and the 27th Beloochees: Lieutenant Beck, commanding detachment Marine Battalion; Major Pierce, 10th Native Infantry.

Major Cooper, commanding 33rd Regiment (the Duke of Wellington's), which led the assault on Magdala.

Major Cooper was amongst the first who scaled the defences near the gateway.

Drummer McGuire and Private Bergin, of the 33rd, were the first who led the way through the stockade to the right, by which the defences of the gate were turned.

Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, 3rd Bombay Native Infantry, Lieutenant-Colonel Parish, 45th Regiment (Sherwood Foresters), Lieutenant-Colonel Bray, 4th (King's Own) Regiment, Major Thelwall, C. B., 21st Punjab Infantry, Colonel Little, 25th Bombay Native Light Infantry, Lieutenant-Colonel Muter, 2nd Bombay Native Infantry (Grenadiers), Lieutenant-Colonel Henning, 26th Cameronians, Lieutenant-Colonel Combe, 18th Bombay Native Infantry.

I am much indebted to Lieutenant-Colonel Holland, Controller of Supply and Transports, for the able and judicious manner in which he performed his very responsible duties, and which imperatively detained him at Zoulla, and deprived me of the benefit of his presence at my head-quarters.

Also to Lieutenant-Colonel Lucas, Deputy Commissary-General, one of the ablest officers of the department, on whom devolved the

whole executive burthen (a burthen which no less efficient and experienced officers could have sustained) of maintaining the supplies at the main base of operations.

Major Mignon, the senior Commissariat Officer on the Highlands, who had the important task of organizing the Depôt during the advance, and Lieutenant Shewell, who were always with the advance columns, and constantly under my notice. These officers were the pioneers of the Commissariat Department, and I am greatly indebted to them for their most valuable exertions.

Lieutenant-Colonel Warden had a most arduous task in the organization of the Transport Corps.

His divisions were thrown into work even before their establishment or organization were complete; notwithstanding the misfortunes which beset the corps in its formation, the final result has been most creditable to Lieutenant Colonel Warden, his second in command Major Nuttall, and the many excellent officers of all branches of the service whose energy and unremitting exertions have overcome every difficulty.

To Lieutenant-Colonel Warden, his Officers, and the subordinates of the Transport Corps, I desire to express my deep obligation.

My acknowledgments are due to Dr. Currie, C.B., for his able direction of the Medical Department, to Dr. Pelly, Deputy Inspector-General, who superintended at Zoulla, and under whose immediate charge were the native troops and followers of the expedition.

To Dr. Mahaffy, Deputy Inspector-General with the First Division, and also Deputy Surgeon-Major Guy, Surgeons Madden and Wyllie, and Assistant-Surgeon Martin, whose services have been most favourably brought to notice.

I desire to express my appreciation of the very great services of Staff Veterinary-Surgeon Hallen, First Class Veterinary-Surgeon Lamb, Veterinary-Surgeon Anderson, and the Officers of that department, also to Captain Swanson, Royal Artillery, Commissary of Ordnance, and to Lieutenant Colonel Bartlett, Treasurer to the Force.

The Officers forming the reconnoitring party, consisting of Brigadier General Merewether, C.B., Colonel Phayre, Quartermaster-General, Bombay Army, Lieutenant-Colonel Wilkins, Royal Engineers, Major Baigrie, Assistant Quartermaster-General, Surgeon Lumsdaine, Captain Pottinger, Royal Artillery, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General, Assistant-Surgeon Martin, who landed at Zoulla in October last, deserve much credit for their valuable services in selecting the Koomeylee defile as the entrance to Abys-

sinia, a decision arrived at after much labour and research ; and fully justified by a further acquaintance with the country.

Brigadier-General Merewether has afforded very valuable service in political duties, in arranging with the various chiefs at Zoulla and on the highlands for the transport of supplies ; and was ever most zealous at all times and seasons to promote the success of the expedition.

Her Majesty's Government are well aware of Brigadier General Merewether's unceasing exertions in favour of the captives since their first imprisonment.

Brigadier-General Merewether reports very favourably of the assistance he received from Lieutenant Mockler, Assistant Resident, Aden, who remained in charge of the relations with the chiefs of Zoulla, and of the services of his Aide-de-Camp, Lieutenant Lockhart, of the Bengal Cavalry.

Colonel the Honorable F. Thesiger, Deputy Adjutant-General, left England at two days' notice to join the force in Abyssinia ; his thorough knowledge of his duties, combined with great ability and untiring energy, rendered him a most valuable Staff Officer.

Colonel Thesiger had the duty of keeping me daily, nay hourly, informed of the state of supplies at every post from Zoulla to head-quarters, and in this and other duties has rendered me most important service during the campaign.

Lieutenant-Colonel Macleod, Assistant Adjutant-General, an officer of much experience, and thoroughly acquainted with the native army, has ably supported the head of his department, and has performed his duties greatly to my satisfaction.

I am greatly indebted to Colonel Phayre, Deputy Quartermaster General, who has rendered most important services in the early examination of the country, the direction of the Pioneer Force to Antalo, and the subsequent advanced reconnoissance.

The very valuable maps and reports of the route, and of the scene of operations, attest the very great energy and intelligence which Colonel Phayre has displayed in the performance of his duties.

Captain Holland, Assistant Quartermaster General, has had charge of his department at head-quarters, and of all correspondence with the Land Transport Corps.

In these duties Captain Holland's exertions have been conspicuous, and the exactness, promptitude, and ability with which they have been carried out deserve my warmest commendation.

Captain Holland afforded me great assistance in the reduction of the camp followers.

Major Baigrie, Assistant Quartermaster General, an officer of ability and great energy, did very valuable service in the first exploration of the coast in October. During the campaign he has served as Assistant Quartermaster General of the First Division, and been very favourably noticed by Major General Sir Charles Staveley, in whose estimation of Major Baigrie I fully concur.

Captain Pottinger, Royal Artillery, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General, was very useful with the reconnoitring party.

During the campaign he has been attached to head-quarters; he has laboured with zeal and shown ability in the performance of his duties.

Captain MacGregor, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General, was employed with the advanced reconnoissance, and by his ability and energy proved himself a valuable Staff Officer.

Captain Fawcett, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General, was also for some time usefully employed with the advanced reconnoissance.

Major Goldsworthy, Brigade Major of Cavalry, has neglected no occasion during the campaign of making himself useful.

Dr. Lumsdaine, when Sanitary Officer at Zoulla, by introducing a good system and rules for conservancy, and seeing them carried out, contributed in a very important degree to the healthiness of the garrison and civil inhabitants.

I am greatly indebted to Doctor Lumsdaine for his constant attention while forming part of the Head-quarter Staff, and for very valuable voluntary service in many extra duties during the expedition.

Major Maude, Deputy Judge Advocate-General, has performed the duties of his office to my entire satisfaction, and has frequently rendered me useful services whilst attending me during the campaign.

Captain Young, Senior Paymaster in Abyssinia, has had very responsible duties in keeping the commissariat, the depôts, the many columns and the small posts supplied with money to meet every emergency, duties which he ably and satisfactorily performed. Captain Young accompanied the advance to Magdala.

Captain Hand was nominated to the charge of the Highland Train, when the dimensions of the Transport Corps necessitated the appointment of a Sub-Director on the highlands.

He had the advantage of the trained muleteers from the Punjaub, many of them old soldiers, and accustomed to discipline.

The conduct of the muleteers has generally been extremely good, and the services of the Highland Train have been performed in a manner which reflects great credit on Captain Hand, and the officers immediately under him.

Captain Griffith, Captain Bainbridge, Captain Twentyman, Captain Hodges, and Lieutenant Ross have distinguished themselves by their zeal and activity, and deserve special notice.

Captain Hand mentions favourably Lieutenant Gaselee, his Staff Officer, Lieutenants Ramsbottom, Mortimer, Ryves, and Abadie.

In a separate report I have detailed the special services of the Officers of the Intelligence Department, which have been performed immediately under my own orders, or under the Divisional or Brigade Commanders.

I will, therefore, only record here that M. Munzinger, the Acting British Consul of Massowa, a gentleman well versed in the languages of Abyssinia, and the earliest in the field, has rendered valuable services, both in the early reconnoissance and throughout the campaign.

Major Grant, C.B., whose African laurels had already been won in another field, Captain Moore, an accomplished Oriental scholar, and Meer Akbar Allee; all of these gentlemen have performed very important duties, requiring great tact and judgment.

Major Roome, Bombay Staff Corps, Colonel Brazier, Retired List, have also performed very valuable services.

It would be difficult to enumerate all Captain Speedy's services,—his familiar knowledge of the Amharic language and character of the Abyssinians have rendered *him* invaluable as an *interpreter* and envoy. He was already well known by character, and he was immediately accepted by the Abyssinians as a guarantee of good treatment and mutual confidence.

I have received the most valuble assistance from the Officers of my Personal Staff.

I selected Colonel Fraser, V.C., Commandant at Head-quarters, for the charge of the outposts, a duty of special importance in so intricate a country, which Colonel Fraser performed with unceasing vigilance, and to my complete satisfaction.

Lieutenant-Colonel Dillon, Military Secretary, has been by my side, and has shared my labours from the first preparations for the expedition to its close. I cannot too strongly express my obligation to him.

Lieutenant Hozier, Assistant Military Secretary, was obliged, to

to regret, to leave the force, from ill health, during the advance beyond Antalo, but not before he had shown himself to be an Officer of great energy and practical ability.

Lieutenant Tweedie, Political Secretary, has performed his special duties with great ability and to my entire satisfaction.

Lieutenant Tweedie attended me in the action of Arogi and at Magdala.

Captain Arbuthnot, Extra Aide-de-Camp (latterly Assistant Military Secretary), was sent on a special mission to Egypt and Syria, which he executed with much judgment, and returned in time to be present at Magdala.

My Aides-de-Camp, Lieutenant W. Scott, Lieutenant R. Napier, and Cornet Lord Charles Hamilton and Cornet Kennedy, 18th Hussars, have afforded me every satisfaction in the performance of their duties.

Lieutenant W. Scott, with my cavalry escort, took part in the investment of Magdala.

I am very happy in this opportunity of saying how cordially Commodore Heath has conducted the naval duties of the expedition in connection with the army.

The spirit of their Commander has been emulated by the Officers and the men of the Royal Navy under his orders.

The labour, under a hot sun, of landing supplies and water, and re-embarking troops, followers, and cattle, has never for a single day ceased since the arrival of the first transport in Annesley Bay.

The history of the labour undergone, by which vast quantities of stores and many thousands of men and cattle have been landed and re-embarked without accident, can only be truly told by Commodore Heath himself; but I have much gratification in expressing, on the part of the army, how greatly we are indebted to Commodore Heath and the officers and men of the Royal Navy.

Greatly too are we indebted to Captain Tryon, R. N., the able Director of Transports.

His thoroughly efficient control of the large fleet under his direction, and his readiness of resource, relieved me from all anxiety in regard to his highly responsible and important office.

The campaign has been one of severe military labour from the first landing to the re-embarkation.

Every Regiment of Infantry carried its own pack of tools, and became pioneers, working hardly, whether in the long marches of the advance or the more trying monotony of the plains of Zoulla.

The port of Zoulla, with its landing piers; the railway, with its numerous bridges; the road through the Koomaylee Pass to Antalo and Magdala; the water-supply at all the stations; the intrenchments at Addigerat and at Antalo; the Commissariat and Transport lines, and the campaign grounds, where the most perfect order was required to water quickly many thousands of animals; all formed one great military work on which the campaign has been supported.

It would be impossible for me to do full justice to the merits of each portion of the force.

All ranks and classes have been inspired with the same honourable spirit, whether in military labour or in conflict with the enemy, and have borne themselves as if success depended on their own individual exertions and devotion.

I beg permission gratefully to acknowledge the confidence placed in me by Her Majesty's Government of India and the unhesitating promptitude with which all my requisitions have been complied with.

I am deeply sensible of the support and encouragement which I have received from His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge in every stage of the expedition.—I have, &c.,

R. NAPIER, *Lieutenant-General,*
Commander-in-Chief, Abyssinia.

Return of Officers favourably mentioned by Generals of Divisions and Brigades and other Superior Officers, for good Services.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wood, Staff, Assistant Adjutant General, 1st Division; Major Bulgrie, Staff, Assistant Quartermaster General, 1st Division; Lieutenant Saunders, Staff (20th Hussars), Aide-de-Camp to Sir Charles Staveley; Captain Arbuthnot, Staff (Royal Artillery), Aide-de-Camp to Sir Charles Staveley;—mentioned by Sir Charles Staveley as most active, and rendered valuable assistance.

Captain Beville, Staff, Brigade Major, 1st Brigade; Captain Hogg, Staff, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General, 1st Brigade; Lieutenant McRae, Staff, Aide-de-Camp to Brigadier General Schneider; Lieutenant Sweny, 4th King's Own Regiment, Baggage Master;—mentioned by Brigadier General Schneider for services in action before, and assault of, Magdala.

Captain Hicks, Staff, Brigade Major, 2nd Brigade 1st Division; Lieutenant James, Staff, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General;

ditto; Captain Capel, Staff, Aide-de-Camp to Brigadier General Wilby;—mentioned by Brigadier General Wilby for services at assault of Magdala.

Lieutenant W. Scott, Staff (Bengal General List), Aide-de-Camp to Commander-in-Chief;—mentioned by Sir Charles Staveley and Colonel Graves as having commanded Commander-in-Chief's escort on the 13th April.

Captain S. de B. Edwardes, Staff, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General, 1st Brigade;—mentioned by Brigadier General Schneider.

Captain Moore, 3rd Light Cavalry, commanding 3rd Light Cavalry;—mentioned in Sir Charles Staveley's despatch on the capture of Magdala.

Captain Paterson, 23rd Punjab Pioneers. Captain Kittoe, 4th King's Own Regiment, commanding escorts to Artillery;—mentioned by Sir Charles Staveley in his despatch on the action of the 10th April.

Captain Leslie, Bombay Sappers, Lieutenant Peacock, Bombay Sappers;—mentioned by Sir Charles Staveley in his despatch on the taking of Magdala.

Lieutenant Nolan, Royal Artillery;—mentioned by Brigadier General Petrie and Lieutenant Colonel Milward on 11th April.

Captain Roberts, 4th King's Own Regiment;—mentioned by Brigadier General Schneider; severely wounded; commanded Baggage Guard, 10th April.

Lieutenant Owen, 3rd Light Cavalry; Captain Jackson, 12th Bengal Cavalry;—mentioned by Colonel Lock for services at assault of Magdala.

Lieutenant Willoughby, 3rd Light Cavalry, Adjutant, and acting Brigade Major;—mentioned by Colonel Graves for services at assault of Magdala.

Quartermaster Stokes, 4th King's Own Regiment; Paymaster Major Maunsell, 4th King's Own Regiment;—mentioned by Lieutenant Colonel Cameron.

Surgeon Sinclair, 33rd Foot;—mentioned by Major Cooper, commanding 33rd Regiment.

Captain Elliott, Madras Sappers, Commanding K Company Madras Sappers;—mentioned by Major Pritchard as having rendered able assistance during assault on Magdala.

Lieutenant Morgan, Royal Engineers; Commanding K Company, Madras Sappers;—mentioned by Major Pritchard as having rendered able assistance during assault on Magdala. (Since dead.)

Lieutenant Foord, Madras Sappers; Surgeon Pearl, Madras Sappers;—mentioned by Major Pritchard in report of the assault of Magdala.

Sergeant Harnold, Royal Engineers; Sergeant Deane, Royal Engineers;—recommended by Major Pritchard.

Lance-Corporal McDonough, Royal Engineers;—mentioned by Major Pritchard as second at the Gateway of Magdala.

Sapper Bailey, Royal Engineers;—mentioned by Major Pritchard as one of the first on the wall of Magdala.

Colour Sergeant Prosser, Royal Engineers; Sapper Marshall, Royal Engineers; Sapper Chamberlain, Royal Engineers;—mentioned by Major Pritchard in his report on the action of the 10th April as having been most active.

Lieutenant Cordell, Royal Navy, Lieutenant Kemp, Royal Navy, Commanding Rocket Batteries;—mentioned by Captain Fellowes for services at Magdala.

Assistant Sergeant Sadowick, Royal Navy, Commanding Rocket Batteries; mentioned by Captain Fellowes for services at Magdala.

Captain Baker, Royal Artillery;—mentioned by Colonel Milward for the action of the 10th April.

Captain Currie, 23rd Punjab Pioneers; Lieutenant Anderson, 23rd Punjab Pioneers; Lieutenant Hotham, 23rd Punjab Pioneers;—mentioned by Major Chamberlain for the action of the 10th April.

II. Division.

Major Bray, Staff, Assistant Adjutant General, 2nd Division; Captain Watts, Staff, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General, 2nd Division; Lieutenant Heath, Staff, 33rd Foot, Aide-de-Camp to Major General Malcolm;—mentioned by Major General Malcolm as having rendered efficient assistance.

Major F. Roberts, V. C., Staff, Royal Artillery, Assistant Quartermaster General at Zoulla;—especially noticed by Major General Russell for ability and zeal, and for excellent assistance rendered.

Major Gammell, Staff, 45th Regiment, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General at Zoulla;—mentioned by Major-General Russell for zeal, ability, and general useful service.

Captain Gregson, Staff, 26th Regiment, Brigade Major, Zoulla;—mentioned by Major General Russell.

Major Quin, Staff, 33rd Regiment, Brigade Major;—recommended by Brigadier General Collings for indefatigable and zealous exertions.

Captain Bally, Staff, 33rd Regiment, Aide-de-Camp to Brigadier General Collings;—recommended for zeal and intelligence.

Lieutenant De Thoren, Staff, 45th Regiment, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster General employed on reconnoissance duties ;—recommended by Brigadier General Collings for attention and zeal, valuably employed in surveying the Sooroo defile.

Captain Fellowes, Staff, Bengal Staff Corps, Brigade Major ;—very favourably mentioned by Brigadier General Stewart.

Major Armstrong, Bengal Staff Corps, 10th Bengal Lancers ;—very favourably mentioned by Major General Malcolm for successful exertions with a very small force in keeping open communications.

Captain Hawkes, Madras Staff Corps ;—very favourably mentioned by Major General Russell for excellent service as Assistant Commissary General at Zoulla.

Major Fairmether, 25th Native Infantry, commanding 25th Native Infantry ; Captain Strut, 3rd Native Infantry, commanding detachment 3rd Native Infantry ;—mentioned by Major General Malcolm ; the Regiments under these officers had heavy convoy duties, which they performed most cheerfully and satisfactorily.

Captain Johnston, 33rd Foot, commanding Detachment 33rd Foot ; Major Thacker, Staff, Assistant Commissary General Senafe ;—mentioned by Major General Malcolm for the able management of native carriage.

Captain Boyle, 2nd Grenadier Native Infantry ; Major Alexander, 18th Regiment Native Infantry, commanding wing of their respective regiments ; employed for nearly four months on the railroad works near Zoulla ;—mentioned by Major General Russell.

Major Hudson, 21st Punjaub Infantry, second in command ; commanding at Undelwells ;—mentioned by Major General Russell.

Captain Gillett, 21st Punjaub Infantry, commanded at Rory Guddy ;—favourably mentioned by Major General Russell.

Captain Tyler, 21st Punjaub Infantry, commanded at Sooroo ;—favourably mentioned by Major General Russell.

Lieutenant LeMesurier, Royal Engineers, Lieutenant Willans, Royal Engineers, Lieutenant Japp, Royal Engineers, Lieutenant Coaker ;—mentioned by Captain Goodfellow, Senior Engineer Officer at Magdala, for services at the assault on 13th April.

Late Lieutenant Cachterlony, late 105th Madras Light Infantry ; had immediate charge of the elephants in Abyssinia ;—his services were very good and valuable.

Major Nuttall, Bombay Staff Corps, second in command Land Transport Corps ; Captain C. M. Griffiths, Bombay Staff Corps, Land Transport Corps ; Captain W. L. Twentyman, 18th Hussars, Land

Transport Corps; Captain E. Boyle, 96th Regiment, Land Transport Corps; Lieutenant A. M. Greene, 102nd Regiment, Land Transport Corps; Lieutenant H. Waring, 2nd Regiment, Land Transport Corps; Lieutenant C. McInroy, Land Transport Corps;—commanded the first Divisions that were raised;—strongly recommended by Director of Transport Corps for extent and value of their assistance.

Lieutenant Mortimer, Royal Artillery; Lieutenant Hennell, Bombay Staff Corps; Lieutenant Hodges, 76th Regiment; Lieutenant Daniell, 105th Regiment; Lieutenant Faulkner, 95th Regiment; Lieutenant Surtees, 109th Regiment; Lieutenant Caldecott, Royal Horse Artillery; Lieutenant Gaunton, 96th Regiment; Lieutenant Gerard, Royal Artillery; Cornet Lucas, 2nd Dragoons; Captain Kelly, 2nd Dragoons; Lieutenant Stuart, Bombay Infantry; Lieutenant Pearse, 76th Regiment; Lieutenant Ouslow, Madras Cavalry; Lieutenant Rennick, 21st Regiment;—mentioned by the Director of Land Transport for the ability, energy, and zeal they brought to bear on their work.

Lieutenant J. D. Clark, Madras Cavalry, Paymaster, Land Transport Corps;—strongly recommended by Director of Transport for the zeal and ability with which he carried out his responsible and numerous duties.

Lieutenant N. E. Cory, 10th Regiment, Quartermaster, Land Transport Corps;—strongly recommended by Director of Transport Train for the creditable and efficient way in which he performed his duties.

R. NAPIER, *Lieutenant General,*
Commander-in-Chief, Abyssinia.

PARIS, *July* 1, 1868.

SIR,—I have the honour to express my regret that, in my despatch of the 1st June, I have omitted the name of Lieutenant Jopp, Royal Engineers, who accompanied the first reconnoitring party, and rendered valuable services throughout the campaign.—I have, &c.,

R. NAPIER, *Lieutenant-General,*
Late Commander-in-Chief, Abyssinia.

STATISTICS RELATING TO THE TRANSPORT SERVICE.

The following statistics in connection with the Transport Service were courteously supplied by Captain Tryon, R.N., the able Director of Transports :—

Troop Ships.

Number of arrivals in Annesley Bay	669
Do. at Aden of ships that did not proceed to Annesley Bay	19
Ships chartered	688
Do. at Aden that did proceed to Annesley Bay	465
Number of departures from Annesley Bay	669
Total tonnage taken up at Bombay, Kurrachee, Aden, &c.	219,299·7375
Do. at Calcutta	45,427·5
Do. in England	30,925
Do. at Suez	6,972
	302,624·2375
Tonnage of Bombay and Bengal Marine ships, including *Semiramis*, *Hyderabad*, tugs, and steam tank vessels, but not lighters	9,605·7021
Total tonnage	312,229·9396
Cost per month of transports, supposing that all the transports that were engaged were under employ at one time	£433,028 17 6
Amount paid to freight ships, excepting *Vine* and *Columbine*, chartered in England as far as Annesley Bay, the particulars of which are not known	10,710 12 0
Amount paid for line of bugalows at Bombay and Bushire to convey animals and fodder	55,585 16 9

Coal.

Coal supplied at Aden	62,647 tons
Do. in Annesley Bay	19,651·4 "
Total	82,298·4 tons

Coal expended in condensing in Annesley Bay, on board transports *Semiramis* and *Hydrabad*..... 3,020½ tons.
When the expedition was at its height coal was discharged from colliers at the rate of..... 191 tons per day.

WATER.

Water supplied at Aden by P. and O. Company, from a return furnished by Mr. Lévis, their Agent ..... 854,795 gallons.
Water condensed at Annesley Bay by Transports specially detained for the purpose, and by *Semiramis* and *Hydrabad* ..... 7,286,926 „

Total..... 8,141,718 „

Water supplied in Annesley Bay.

Condensed by transports and condensing ships... 28,918-5
Supplied by men-of-war, taken out of sailing transports, water sent from Suez and Bombay. about 11,000

Total gallons... 39,918-4 5

Cost of water condensed by transports in Annesley Bay, supplied by condensing steamers, including the cost of their four steamers always detained there for the purpose ..... 4·35d. per gallon.

ACTUAL NUMBERS OF TROOPS, &c. THAT LANDED.

Troops.

Officers	520
European Troops	4,250
Native Troops	9,447
Followers	26,214
Civilians	433
Women followers	140

Animals.

Horses	2,538
Elephants	44
Mules	16,022
Ponies	1,651
Camels	5,735
Donkeys	1,759
Bullocks	7,071
Sheep	12,839

NUMBER OF TROOPS, &c., THAT RETURNED.

The following is the number of soldiers, &c., conveyed to *Bombay* at the *close* of the expedition :—

Troops.

Officers	369
European Troops	2,258
Native Troops	9,606
Followers	21,896
Civilians	280

Animals.

Horses	2,122
Mules and Ponies	4,126
Bullocks	1,075
Elephants	39
Camels	40

MEMORANDUM showing the amount of Sickness and Mortality in the British Troops, Abyssinian Expeditionary Force, during the entire Campaign.

Average strength	2,688·8
Average daily sick	156·62
Ratio per cent. sick to strength	5·8
Ditto deaths	1·3

Casualties.

Officers—	
Highlands	7
Lowlands	4
Total	11
Men—	
Highlands	17
Lowlands	20
Total	37

Officers' Deaths caused as follows:—

Diseases.	No.	Remarks.
Dysenteria acuta	2	
Insolatio	2	
Vulnus sclopetarium	2	One accident, one suicide.
Morb. valv. cordis	1	
Apoplexia	1	
Emersio	1	Accidental drowning.
Febris continua	1	
Angina pectoris	1	
Total.....	11	

Men's Deaths.

Diseases.	Number.
Dysenteria acuta	17
„ chronic	1
Vulnus sclopetarium	1
Insolatio	3
Febris remitt	1
„ intermitt	1
„ typhoid	1
„ continua	1
Hepatatis acuta	1
Aneurisma	1
Nephria	1
Nephritis	1
Verrenatio	1
Paralysis	1
Total.....	37

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